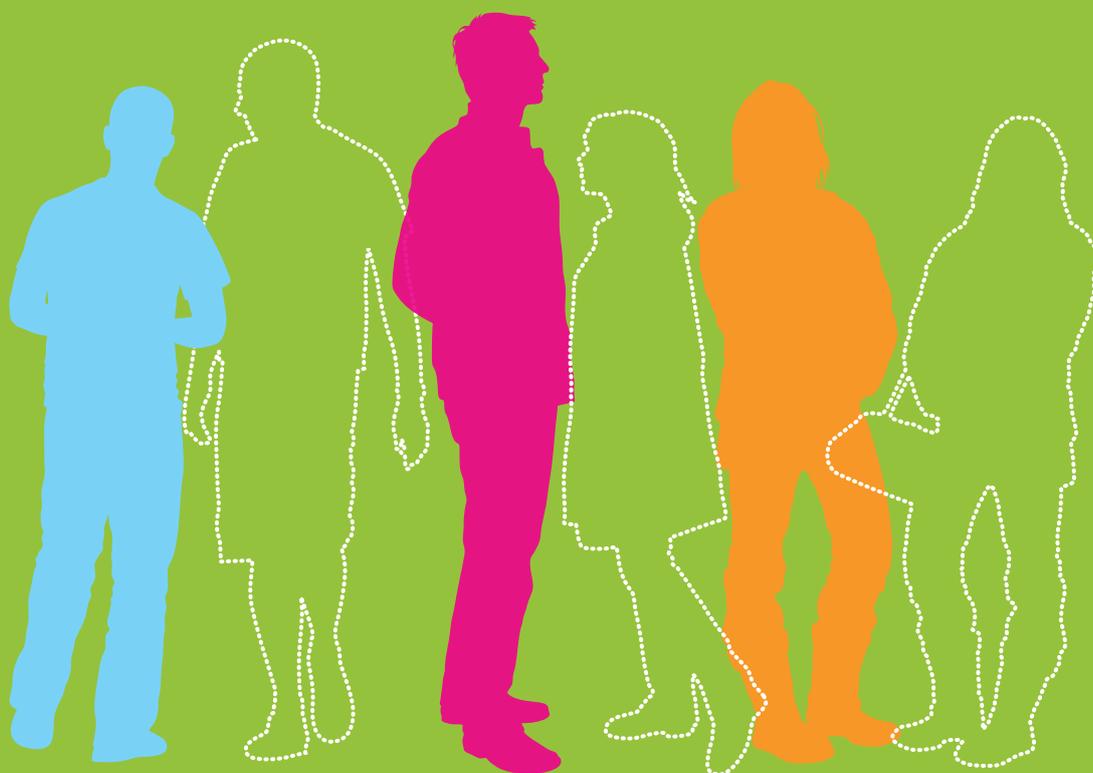


A Resource for
SPHE and RSE

GROWING UP LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL and TRANSGENDER



A Resource for SPHE and RSE

FOREWORD

Growing Up Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender: A Resource for SPHE and RSE has been developed by the Department of Education and Skills and the Health Service Executive through the Social, Personal and Health Education Support Service, in conjunction with GLEN (Gay and Lesbian Equality Network) and BeLonG To Youth Services.

This resource is intended to support the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) at Junior and Senior Cycle level. It is not a stand-alone resource but should be used in conjunction with other materials such as the *Teaching Relationships, Understanding Sexuality Teaching (TRUST)* resource at Senior Cycle.

The aim of the resource is to increase awareness and understanding about sexual orientation and gender identity and to reduce levels of prejudice and discrimination against people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT).

We would like to extend thanks and appreciation to all those who were involved in the development of the resource, including 'Crossing the Line' production company, whose two-part documentary for RTÉ called 'Growing Up Gay' was used for the DVD, and especially to the young people and their families who participated in the documentary and who gave us permission to include their stories.

Appreciation is also expressed to the members of the working group:

- **Pat Courtney**, Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator, SPHE Support Service
- **Siobhan Foster**, Regional Manager, SPHE Support Service
- **Moira Germaine**, Senior Health Promotion Officer - Sexual Health, HSE South
- **Sandra Irwin-Gowran**, Director of Education Policy Change, GLEN
- **Carol-Anne O'Brien**, Acting Director of Services, BeLonG To Youth Services
- **Frances Shearer**, National Co-ordinator, SPHE Support Service



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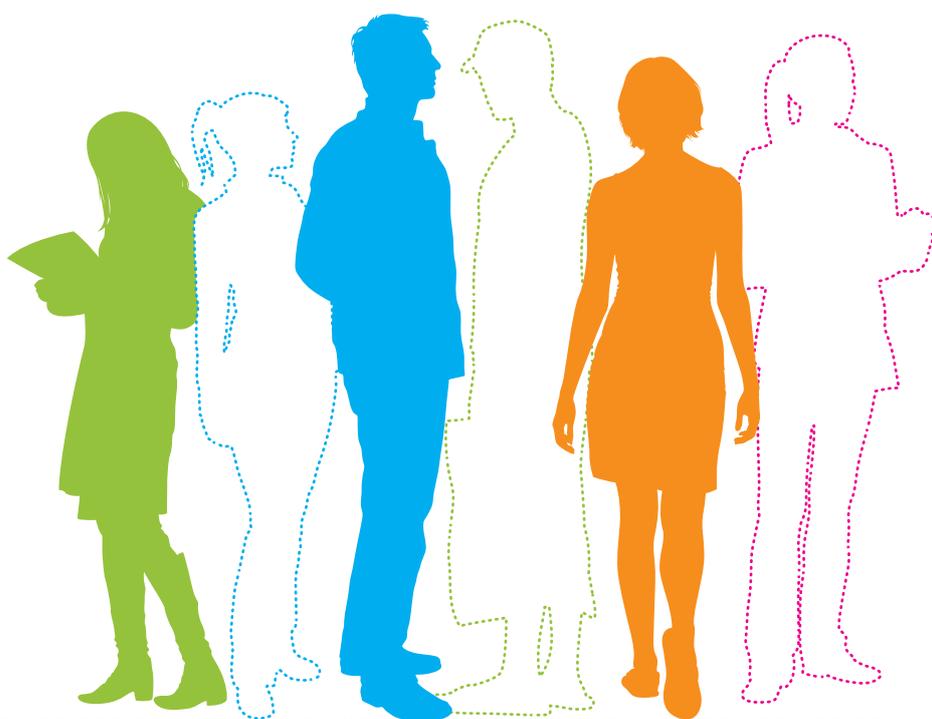


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INTRODUCTION

GROWING UP LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER: A RESOURCE FOR SPHE/RSE

Growing Up Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender: A Resource for SPHE/RSE (henceforth named *Growing Up LGBT*) was developed in response to requests from teachers and students for updated Irish resource materials for RSE.

This resource aims to increase understanding and awareness about sexual orientation and gender identity and to reduce stigma and discrimination against people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Teaching about sexual orientation, gender identity and related issues such as homophobia can prove very effective in addressing homophobic bullying, which is one of the most common forms of harassment experienced by young LGBT people. Homophobia can be targeted against young people who are LGBT, as well as those who are perceived to be LGBT or who may have LGBT family members. It can also affect young people who witness it or participate in it.

The resource also aims to develop in young people a greater understanding of the experience of being LGBT, to raise awareness about issues related to coming out, to foster equality and respect within a human rights framework and to provide information about relevant support organisations.

Growing Up LGBT is designed for use with all year groups from first year upwards, as part of an integrated Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme at Junior Cycle and as part of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) at Senior Cycle.

Growing Up LGBT is neither a prescribed nor a comprehensive resource. It should be used in conjunction with other resource materials to support the teaching of a planned, comprehensive programme of SPHE/RSE.

Each school has a responsibility to ensure that any RSE resource materials used are consistent with the school's ethos and RSE policy.

Growing Up LGBT consists of a DVD and 18 accompanying lessons. The DVD was developed from a

two-part documentary for RTÉ called 'Growing Up Gay', which explored the experiences of LGBT young people growing up in Ireland.

The lessons address the following themes:

- Understanding lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues
- Gender identity/Transgender people
- Coming out to self and others
- Relationships of friendships and love
- Prejudice and discrimination
- Celebrations and supports.

Each lesson plan is accompanied by background information for the teacher. A glossary of terms is provided in Appendix 2.

Significant advances have been made in recent years in relation to the equal treatment of LGBT people in Irish society. An overview of key developments is provided in this introduction, as well as key findings from research into the experience of young people who are LGBT. Teachers should familiarise themselves with this information prior to teaching the lessons.

SPHE AND RSE - THE WIDER EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual. There is a growing recognition that SPHE is as important for young people as any other area of the curriculum; it enables students to learn about themselves and their relationships with others and to develop skills and competencies that will enable them to participate as active and responsible members of society. A young person who has a high degree of self-worth, a sense of security and positive self-image will be better disposed to school life and to the variety of learning situations it offers.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an integral part of Junior Cycle SPHE and must also be taught at Senior Cycle. RSE is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge and understanding of developing attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy.

In the school setting it is an integral part of general education provision, which seeks to promote the overall development of the person and which includes the integration of sexuality into personal understanding, growth and development. This applies to all young people regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Developmental milestones for young people who are LGBT are similar to those for other young people; however, LGBT young people can face additional challenges due to lack of understanding, prejudice and discrimination.

Through RSE and this resource, formal opportunities are provided for young people to evaluate the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values that they receive. In this way they can be helped to form values and establish behaviours within a moral framework. While parents are the primary educators in this area, schools have a key role to play. Ideally parents and schools will work in partnership to provide comprehensive relationships and sexuality education.

Schools are required to teach all aspects of RSE, including sexual orientation and related areas. It is not possible to omit elements of the programme on the grounds of school ethos; however, the Department of Education and Skills advises that the programme should be taught within the ethos and value system of the school as expressed in the RSE policy (Circular 0027/2008).

Aims of RSE

RSE, which is located in the overall framework for SPHE, has as its specific aims:

- To help young people understand and develop friendships and relationships
- To promote an understanding of sexuality
- To promote a positive attitude towards one's own sexuality and in one's relationships with others
- To promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction
- To enable young people to develop attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework.

Objectives of RSE

RSE should enable students to:

- Acquire the understanding and skills necessary to form healthy friendships and relationships
- Develop a positive sense of self-awareness and the skills for building and maintaining self-esteem
- Become aware of the variety of ways in which

individuals grow and change, especially during adolescence and to develop respect for difference between individuals

- Understand human physiology, with particular reference to the reproductive cycle, human fertility and sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Understand sexual development and identity and explore aspects of sexuality including sex roles, stereotyping, gender issues and cultural influences on sexuality
- Value family life and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood
- Develop strategies for decisions and actions consistent with personal moral integrity and respectful of the rights and dignity of others
- Develop skills for coping with peer pressure, conflict and threats to personal safety.

THE WHOLE SCHOOL CONTEXT

School Environment

The processes of teaching and learning are bound up with personal and social development. Every teacher and staff member, every class and extra-curricular activity can offer opportunities for enhancing the personal and social development of the student.

A supportive school environment is essential if SPHE and RSE are to be effective.

In such an environment:

- People feel valued
- Self-esteem is fostered
- Respect, fairness and tolerance are evident
- High expectations and standards are promoted
- There is support for those with difficulties
- Open communication is the norm
- Effort is recognised and rewarded
- Uniqueness/difference is valued
- Conflict is handled creatively
- Initiative and creativity are encouraged
- Social, moral and civic values are promoted.

Parents

Parents are the primary educators of the child in the area of relationships and sexuality; they are aware of the culture within which the young person lives and of the religious, civic, moral and personal values that they wish to pass on to them. A school's RSE programme, planned in consultation with parents, should reflect these values. Parents should be provided with opportunities to familiarise themselves with teaching materials to be used in class, such as the *Growing Up LGBT* DVD and lessons, if they wish to do so. Parents' groups can be supported to develop appropriate training opportunities to complement and enhance school-based programmes.

The Moral Framework

The aims of RSE set it within a moral, spiritual and social framework. A positive attitude to sexuality will be expressed in responsible and respectful attitudes and behaviour towards oneself and others. Sexual behaviour is not just a personal and private matter, but has social and community implications as well. The values inherent in an RSE programme should be consistent with the core values and ethos of the school, as articulated in the school's RSE policy. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that all materials used in an RSE class are appropriate to the needs of the students and are taught in a way that is consistent with the ethos of the school.

School Ethos and LGBT People

As many schools in Ireland have a religious ethos, some teachers may have questions about how their school can address LGBT issues whilst respecting the religious ethos of the school. School management bodies, including the Joint Managerial Body for Secondary Schools, which represents the majority of Catholic and Protestant secondary schools, has expressly endorsed resources designed to ensure the inclusion of LGBT young people in school (see p10 for more on these resources).

School Policy

Information on developing and reviewing an RSE policy is available on the Department of Education and Skills website: www.education.ie in the Education Personnel section under the heading School Policies and Plans - RSE. All schools are required to develop an RSE policy in consultation with teachers, parents, Boards of Management and, where appropriate, with students. The RSE policy for each school will reflect the ethos of the school and will articulate the moral and values framework within which RSE will be taught. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to teach within that framework. Provision should be made for ongoing

evaluation of the RSE policy in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Teaching methods in RSE, as in all of SPHE, are concerned with the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes and skills. An open and facilitative teaching style and participative and experiential methodologies are essential.

Cross-curricular Opportunities

Teachers with specialist knowledge in particular areas can support the work of RSE at different stages in the programme. At Senior Cycle contributions can be made by teachers of Biology, Home Economics and Religious Education. Co-ordination can enhance cross-curricular opportunities and will ensure comprehensive delivery of RSE to all students.

The Wider Community

Young people are exposed to a wide variety of messages about sexual behaviour and identity. The culture within which they live should be kept in mind in the development and teaching of an RSE programme. Consultation with students themselves can only serve to enhance the effectiveness of the programme. The wider community can support the work of the school by providing speakers and visitors to address particular aspects of RSE. However, it is recommended that this takes place in the context of a planned and comprehensive programme. It is the responsibility of the school to make all outside speakers and visitors aware of the school's RSE and child protection policies.

Child Protection

All school personnel should be familiar with the Department of Education and Skills' Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (www.education.ie). The guidelines provide information about handling disclosure of abuse by a student and the steps that should be taken if a disclosure is made or if concerns about a student arise.

School personnel have a responsibility to ensure that students know the limits of confidentiality. If a young person is at risk a member of staff has a responsibility to pass this information on to the relevant person in the school or to the young person's parents.

The Child Protection Procedures state that if the school becomes aware that a young person is sexually active under the age of consent it has a responsibility to inform his or her parents. The legal age of consent in Ireland is 17 for boys and girls for heterosexual and for homosexual sex.

Supporting the Effective Delivery of RSE

All teaching is challenging, but teaching RSE is particularly challenging; it demands a range of skills and a high level of sensitivity. For this reason RSE should not be assigned to teachers who have not received training, or without prior consultation with the teacher.

Teachers of RSE may require advice and guidance from colleagues, the principal and the Board of Management, especially if clarification of ethos issues is required.

Planned communication and co-operation is required between those teaching RSE and those involved in pastoral care and guidance in a school. In the interests of gender balance, responsibility for teaching RSE/SPHE should be shared equally by male and female teachers where possible.

The RSE Teacher

The relationship between teacher and student is a core aspect of successful learning in all areas of education but this is especially true in RSE, given the personal nature of the subject. Students respond well to teachers who show authenticity and empathy and who are willing to listen to and respect their views. At the same time the teacher must be able to set limits and boundaries. The following points should be borne in mind by teachers of RSE:

- Ongoing professional development and training for all teachers of RSE/SPHE will support the effective delivery of RSE.
- Teachers assigned to teach RSE/SPHE must have an understanding of and familiarity with the range of active and experiential methodologies associated with education in this area.
- All teachers of RSE at Senior Cycle should inform themselves about the previous learning of students at Junior Cycle in RSE/SPHE and to what extent students are familiar with participative methodologies. If this is a new way of working for a group, participative methodologies should be introduced gradually and carefully.

- Teachers must be familiar with their school's RSE policy, particularly with regard to some of the sensitive moral issues that may arise in an RSE class. A school does not have a right to omit any aspect of RSE, but it does have a right to ensure that topics are taught in a way that is consistent with the ethos of the school. It is the responsibility of the RSE teacher to articulate the values expressed in the school's RSE policy in a way that is respectful to all. This can be done while also allowing students to express their views and opinions in a respectful way.
- The teacher is responsible for ensuring that the classroom is a safe environment for students. A way of fostering this climate from the beginning is to help students to establish ground rules for working together as a group. For more information on this see *Resource Materials for RSE – Senior Cycle*, p11.
- As many of the activities in the *Growing Up LGBT* resource involve students discussing in pairs and small groups, the teacher should ensure that students are aware that listening is a skill that includes respecting the views and privacy of another person.
- Teachers should be sensitive to the needs of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- It may be necessary to set boundaries for students in terms of what can be discussed and what questions can be answered in an RSE class.
- Given the sensitivity of many of the topics in RSE teachers should be aware of the range of pastoral and counselling supports available within the school and outside school. A list of relevant agencies can be found in Appendix 1.

ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION OF SPHE/RSE

Senior Cycle SPHE and RSE must be open to assessment and evaluation. This can be done in the following ways:

Student Self-assessment

Such assessment can be done in class by providing students with questionnaires and/or worksheets on which they might record their own progress or learning.

These can be kept in a portfolio. Alternatively students can be encouraged to keep a journal recording their key learnings. Some of the outcomes of self-assessment will be private, but students are also encouraged in this resource to provide feedback for the teacher on the value of the suggested activities. This will allow the teacher to modify or extend the RSE programme in light of the views of students.

Assessment of Students

This can involve the assessment of students' work and skills through specific tasks, homework or project work. Samples of work done in SPHE/RSE might be kept by the students in a portfolio as a record of achievement. The possibility of a certificate of completion being awarded by a school at the end of a term, year or module of work should be considered.

Programme Evaluation

This involves continuous evaluation of the programme structure, materials and teaching methodologies in a school. Students, parents, teachers and Boards of Management might contribute to this.

WHAT RESEARCH TELLS US ABOUT LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE AND SCHOOL

It is widely recognised that LGBT students are part of every school community and, consequently, that schools need to be inclusive in the programmes that they offer in order to ensure that all students feel valued and supported and therefore able to achieve their full potential.

Irish research¹ consistently reveals that many young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender have negative experiences of school and the stress this causes puts them at a greater risk of:

- Not achieving their full potential
- Developing poor self-esteem
- Leaving school early
- Experiencing mental health problems
- Becoming involved in self-harming behaviour.

A report² funded by the National Office for Suicide Prevention of the Health Service Executive examined the experiences of 1,110 LGBT people in Ireland. It found that the most common age that people realise they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender is 12 years and the most common age that they first disclose their sexual

orientation or gender identity to others ('come out') is 17 years. Some of the key findings from this study on school experiences relate to being safe, being able to participate fully, and the support of young LGBT people at school.

Safety at School

- 58% reported the existence of homophobic bullying in their schools.
- Over 50% had been called abusive names by fellow students.
- 34% reported homophobic comments by teachers and other staff members.
- 25% had been physically threatened by peers.
- 40% had been verbally threatened by fellow students because they were or were thought to be LGBT.

Participation at School

- 72% felt that they couldn't be themselves at school.
- 20% admitted to missing school because they felt threatened or were afraid of getting hurt at school.
- 5% left school early because of how they were treated as a consequence of their LGBT identity.

Support at School

- 60% said that there wasn't a teacher or other adult in school that they could talk to.
- 4% said there was open discussion of LGBT issues in anti-bullying seminars.
- 4% said that there was a written policy to protect LGBT students from homophobic bullying.

This new knowledge about the impact of homophobic bullying, coupled with the growing visibility of LGBT students in schools, presents new challenges for schools. This resource is intended to provide support in meeting these challenges as well as aiding schools in meeting the needs of the curriculum.

1 Mayock, P., Bryan, A., Carr, N. and Kitching, K. (2009). *Supporting LGBT Lives: A Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People*. GLEN and BeLong To Youth Services, Dublin.
Minton, S., Dahl, J. O'Moore, T., Mona, A. and Donnelly, T. (2008). "An Exploratory Survey of the Experiences of Homophobic Bullying Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Young People in Ireland." *Irish Educational Studies*. Vol. 27, No. 2, June 2008, 177-191.
Norman, J. and Galvin, M. (2006). *Straight Talk: An Investigation of Attitudes and Experiences of Homophobic Bullying in Second-Level Schools*. Dublin City University: Centre for Educational Evaluation, Dublin.

2 Mayock, Bryan, Carr and Kitching (2009). *Supporting LGBT Lives: A Study of the Mental Health and Well-being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People*. GLEN and BeLonG To Youth Services, Dublin.

NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND POLICY RELATED TO LGBT PEOPLE

There is a growing body of national policy and legislation that directly relates to LGBT people; key areas include the following, which are expanded upon below:

- Equality legislation
- Civil partnership for same-sex couples
- Department of Education and Skills Working Group on Combating Bullying in Schools
- Department of Education & Skills supported policy resources for schools
- Forthcoming gender recognition legislation.

Equality Legislation

LGBT people are protected from discrimination in employment (Employment Equality Act, 1998) and in the provision of goods and services (Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2011). This means that it is illegal for an employer or a school to discriminate against people on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity (transgender people are protected under the gender ground).

The Equal Status Act is the key piece of legislation protecting young people in school who are LGBT. The main provisions of the Act aim to:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Prohibit discrimination on nine specific grounds (gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, race, membership of the Traveller community, and disability)
- Prohibit harassment on these grounds and to prohibit sexual harassment
- Require reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities
- Allow for positive action.

Responsibilities of Schools in relation to the Equal Status Act

A person who is responsible for the operation of a school must not permit a student of a school (or anyone else who has the right to be in the school) to be harassed because of their sexual orientation or gender or to be sexually harassed. Schools are also liable for discrimination or harassment by an employee (including

teaching and ancillary staff), whether or not it was done with the school's knowledge or approval.

Civil Partnership and Certain Rights of Cohabitants Act 2010

This Act allows same-sex couples to register their civil partnership in much the same way as opposite-sex couples do for marriage. The legal rights and obligations that civil partners assume upon registering as civil partners are wide ranging and extensive: they are almost the same as those that apply to marriage. Rights include equivalent treatment to married couples across a whole range of areas including maintenance, inheritance and succession, social welfare, pensions, taxation, immigration, citizenship, succession and enduring power of attorney. Civil partners, similar to married spouses, are protected in equality legislation - in both employment and in the provision of services.

A critical gap in the civil partnership legislation is the lack of provisions around parenting. Many LGBT people are parents and the number of LGBT people and couples having children is growing. However, it is not possible currently for someone in a same-sex relationship who is a non-biological parent to apply for guardianship. Similarly, while it is possible for a single person of any sexual orientation to apply to adopt it is not possible for same-sex couples, or civilly partnered couples to apply to adopt. Application to adopt by couples is confined to married (heterosexual) couples only.

However, the current Programme for Government commits to bringing forward legislation to amend the Civil Partnership Act to address omissions relating to children.

Department of Education and Skills Working Group on Combating Bullying in Schools

In May 2012 the Department of Education and Skills established a Working Group on Tackling Bullying, including homophobic bullying, cyber-bullying and racist bullying. The Working Group will develop a comprehensive action plan on combating bullying, including homophobic bullying, in which all education stakeholders will have a role to play.

Gender Recognition Legislation

Currently Ireland is in contravention of the European Convention on Human Rights in that no provision exists for transgender persons to have their birth certificates amended to reflect their true gender.

In response to a High Court ruling, the Government set up an Interdepartmental Working Group to advise on legislation. The Group made a number of recommendations to the Government in 2011, including that the State should bring forward legislation to formally recognise the 'changed gender of transsexuals who have made a permanent transition to the preferred gender'. Formal recognition would include the right to a new birth certificate.

The current Programme for Government commits to ensuring that **'transgender people will have legal recognition and extend protections of the equality legislation to them'**.

Department of Education and Skills Supported Policy Resources for Schools

The Department of Education and Skills (DES), Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) and key education partners have produced a series of resources for key individuals in schools in supporting LGBT students and addressing homophobic bullying. This series of complementary resources is outlined below. The last resource in the series is currently being prepared and will provide guidelines specifically to Boards of Management on their responsibilities in supporting LGBT students.

- ***Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students in Post-Primary Schools: Guidance for Principals and School Leaders (2009)***. Published by the Department of Education and Skills and GLEN (with the support of the JMB, IVEA, ACCS, NAPD, NPCpp, ASTI and TUI³), the resource provides concrete suggestions in relation to policy, programmes, practice and how to communicate this to LGB and other students. Also available in Irish.
- ***Including Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students in School Policies: Guidelines for Principals (2011)***. Published by the NAPD, the DES and GLEN, this resource provides guidelines on how to ensure specific policy areas are inclusive of LGBT students and the issues that impact them, such as homophobic bullying.
- ***Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Students: The Role of Guidance Counsellors (2010)***. Published by NCGE⁴ in conjunction with GLEN, this resource offers advice to guidance counsellors as they support LGBT students.

- ***Supporting Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students: The Role of Teachers (updated 2011)***. Published by the ASTI, the TUI and GLEN, this resource provides pointers to teachers in how they can support LGBT students and address homophobic bullying and name-calling.

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- 3 JMB - Joint Managerial Body; IVEA - Irish Vocational Education Association; ACCS - Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools; NAPD - National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals; NPCpp - National Parents' Council Post Primary; ASTI - Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland; TUI - Teachers' Union of Ireland.
 - 4 NCGE - National Centre for Guidance in Education.

GROWING UP LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL and TRANSGENDER

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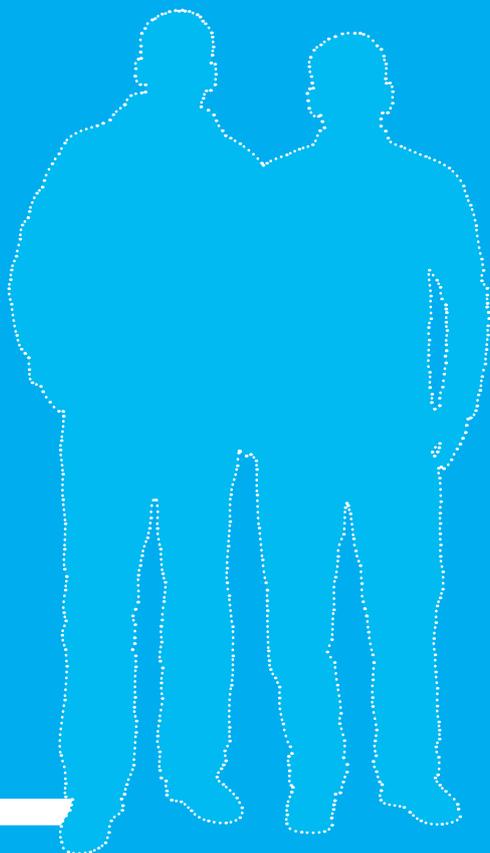
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- Lesson 3 Coming Out to Self
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TEACHING THE JUNIOR CYCLE LESSONS

These lessons are designed to be taught in the context of a wider SPHE programme, in the order in which they appear. Depending on the structure of a school's SPHE programme, a teacher may wish to select from the lessons, or teach them in a different order.

If a teacher decides to change the order, he or she is advised to ensure that students are familiar with the ground rules and language contained in Lesson 1.

All SPHE lessons should be introduced with a reference to ground rules and boundaries, but it is particularly important in relation to this topic, given some of the negative attitudes and stereotypes that still prevail in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Ground rules might include listening, being respectful of other people's views and not making fun of people.

Many of the lessons refer to the use of a journal by students to record their thoughts and opinions on a topic. This should be viewed as a reflective journal whereby students can review how their opinions and thoughts change over the course of a work module.

Many of the lessons use group work methods; this requires a very safe and supportive classroom environment. If it is not possible to provide such an environment the teacher may wish to adapt the methodologies and use more whole-class rather than small-group discussion.

Teachers should explain to the students that while the SPHE class provides an opportunity to discuss and share opinions, it is not the right place to disclose information that is personal or sensitive, either about oneself or about another person,

especially if that information hasn't been shared with a trusted person before. If a student wishes to discuss something of a personal or confidential nature they can be advised to talk to the teacher after the class, or to another trusted adult, or to contact an appropriate support organisation, such as those listed in Appendix 1.

When discussing this topic teachers should be sensitive to the fact that some students in the class may be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or may have family members who are. However, teachers should not make assumptions about someone's identity, or ask direct questions.

As stated in the introduction (see p6) each school is responsible for ensuring that all SPHE/RSE resource materials are used in a way that is consistent with the ethos of the school, as articulated in the school's RSE policy. The teacher should be familiar with the school's RSE policy. It is possible to articulate the values inherent in the policy while at the same time facilitating students to discuss attitudes and values in a respectful way.

The age of consent to sexual intercourse, whether heterosexual or homosexual, is 17 for boys and girls.

The letters LGBT, standing for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, are used throughout the lessons.

In order to help to integrate the lessons with the SPHE curriculum, the relevant SPHE modules are listed at the beginning of the lessons.

Teachers are advised to provide students with information about support organisations – see Appendix 1. The organisation BeLonG To is of particular relevance to students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

LESSON

1



JUNIOR CYCLE

RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

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

Aim

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

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

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

Student Materials

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

Teacher Materials

Copy of School Code of Behaviour.



Background Information for the Teacher

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

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

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

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

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

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

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

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

2. Discussion

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

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

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

Scenario A:

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

Scenario B:

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

Scenario C:

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

Scenario D:

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

Take feedback for each scenario.

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

Discussion Pointers:

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

3. Vocabulary Activity

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

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

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

Take feedback; check for correct matching and understanding.

Discussion Pointers:

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

4. Conclusion

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

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

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

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

LESSON 1 WORKSHEET 1



VOCABULARY

Bisexual

Someone who is attracted to both males and females.

Gay

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

Straight

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

Heterosexual

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

Homosexual

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

Lesbian

A female who is attracted to other females.

LGBT

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

Sexual
Orientation

The attraction we feel towards people of a particular sex.

LESSON

2



JUNIOR CYCLE

GENDER

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

Aim

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

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

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

Student Materials

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

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

Teacher Materials

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



Background Information for the Teacher

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

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

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

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

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

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

2. Gender Activities

Option a)

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

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

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

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

or

Option b)

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

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

Discussion Pointers:

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

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

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

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

3. Conclusion

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

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

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

LESSON 2 WORKSHEET 2



EVERYDAY OBJECTS – MALE OR FEMALE?

LESSON 2 WORKSHEET 3



QUALITIES - MASCULINE OR FEMININE?

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

LESSON



JUNIOR CYCLE

COMING OUT TO SELF

This lesson links with the **Year 2 SPHE** modules: **RSE** - 'Recognising and Expressing Feelings and Emotions' and 'Peer Pressure and Other Influences' and **Emotional Health** - 'Self-confidence'.

Aim

To enable students to become more aware of the process of understanding and accepting a gay, lesbian or bisexual sexual orientation, often referred to as 'coming out to self'.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have a greater understanding of what it is like for young people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual.
- (ii) Be more aware of the process of coming out.

Student Materials

Lesson 3, Worksheet 4: Coming Out to Self.
Lesson 3, Worksheet 5: Hand of Support (alternatively students can be asked to draw a hand).

Appendix 1 – Supports for young people and their families.

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT
DVD: **Coming Out to Self - Riyadh and Zoe's Stories.**



Background Information for the Teacher

'Coming Out' is a process of a) understanding and accepting one's own sexual orientation - sometimes

referred to as 'coming out to self' - and b) developing the confidence to tell another person or other people about it, sometimes referred to as 'coming out to others'. The process is similar for someone who is transgender.

Recent research has found that the most common age at which young people realise they are LGBT is 12, but that most will not disclose this for about five years. The study also found that the period in between realising one's sexual orientation and 'coming out' was often a difficult one for young people: they were afraid of being rejected by family and friends and were anxious about experiencing isolation and/or harassment in school. Transgender people often realise their gender identity when they are even younger than 12.

Young people who are LGBT often experience bullying and harassment due to the prejudices in society about those whose gender identity or sexual orientation is different from the mainstream. This in turn can lead to problems with depression, low self-esteem, addiction and self-harm. This is sometimes called 'internalised homophobia', meaning that the young person internalises some of the negative messages and finds it difficult to develop a positive sense of their own LGBT identity. Research findings relating to this can be found on p30.

As the time prior to coming out can be a very challenging one for young LGBT people it is important that they are supported and that if they do choose to disclose this aspect of their identity that the disclosure is received with respect, understanding and acceptance.

This lesson addresses the challenges of 'coming out to self'. It does this by exploring the experiences of two young people, Riyadh and Zoe, as they tell their stories in the DVD.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Using the Background Information for the Teacher, explain what is meant by 'coming out to self'. Tell students that they will be exploring this by looking at the stories of two young people, Riyadh and Zoe, who speak about their personal experience. Point out that the case studies involve two young people coming out about their sexual orientation but some of the issues are similar to those experienced by people coming out as transgender.

Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.



2. DVD and Worksheet

Before playing the two sections of the DVD, explain to students that you are going to play the sections once. You will then play the DVD a second time, but will give them a worksheet and ask them to answer the questions as they are watching. Tell them that they will be discussing their responses to the questions in pairs or small groups after they have watched the DVD.

- Play the two sections of the DVD.
- Give out copies of Worksheet 4: Coming Out to Self.
- Play the two sections again but ask students to fill in the answers to the questions as they watch.
- Ask students to discuss their responses in pairs or small groups.

Take feedback from the small groups.

Discussion Pointers:

- Are there risks for a young person when they come out?
- How can they make this process as safe as possible?
- How can other people help?

3. Reflection

Remind students that we all experience difficulty at times in our lives. An important skill for keeping healthy is to be able to tell someone that we trust how we are feeling. This is the first step towards getting help and beginning to feel better.

As well as people we know and trust, there are many organisations that offer help.

Distribute Worksheet 5: Hand of Support (alternatively, students could draw an outline of their own hand on a blank page).

Ask students to write in along the fingers, five people or groups to whom they would turn in times of difficulty. These might be people from their family, friends, community, school or elsewhere.

Take feedback and make a list on the board of the different people and groups suggested. Add to it any that you might think have been omitted.

Give students copies of Appendix 1 and make specific reference to BeLoNG To. This organisation supports LGBT young people in Ireland by providing them and their families with advice and a safe place where they can meet other people and understand that they are valued and respected.

4. Conclusion

Conclude the class by asking students to reflect for a few minutes on what they have learned in this lesson and complete the following sentence in their SPHE Journal:

'One thing I understand better as a result of today's class is...'

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

LESSON 3 WORKSHEET 4



COMING OUT TO SELF



How did Riyadh feel when he realised he might be gay?		
How did Zoe feel when she realised she might be lesbian?		
What helped Riyadh at that time?		
What helped Zoe?		
Where might Riyadh and Zoe have got help?	RIYADH	ZOE
Who could have helped?	RIYADH	ZOE
How did their feelings change over time?	RIYADH	ZOE
What have you learned from listening to Riyadh and Zoe's stories?		



LESSON 3 WORKSHEET 5



HAND OF SUPPORT



LESSON



JUNIOR CYCLE

FRIENDSHIP

This lesson links with the **Year 2 SPHE** modules: **Friendship** - 'The Changing Nature of Friendship', **RSE** - 'Recognising and Expressing Feelings and Emotions' and **Emotional Health** - 'Self-confidence'.

Aim

To enable students to reflect on the value of friendship in the lives of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have a greater awareness of the challenges faced by young LGBT people in communicating with others about their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- (ii) Have a better understanding of the positive impact that supportive friends can have.

Student Materials

Lesson 4, Worksheet 6: Riyadh's Story (copies for half the class).

Lesson 4, Worksheet 7: Natasha's Story (copies for half the class).

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Friendship – Riyadh and Natasha's Stories.



Background Information for the Teacher

Adolescence is a time of challenges, opportunities and growth. During adolescence young people explore who they are and how they want to interact with others. Friendships formed at this time are particularly important, as they provide both a sense of belonging and enhanced self-esteem. This is particularly important in the case of a young LGBT person as they are more likely to talk about their identity to a friend first.

A young person who does not feel that they belong or who feels different from their peers may feel vulnerable, alone and unsupported. Friends and friendships have a crucial role to play in supporting young LGBT people as they come out. Feeling accepted allows self-confidence to grow and allows openness and trust to develop. Friendships are strengthened as a result. The stories of Riyadh and Natasha illustrate this.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Introduce the lesson by outlining the aim and learning outcomes, referring to the Background Information for the Teacher. Ask students to recall some of the activities that they may have participated in already during their SPHE classes and what they learned about the importance of friendship in the life of a young person. Explain that this lesson will explore the topic of friendship from the perspective of two young gay people.

Remind students of ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.



2. DVD and Worksheet

Before playing the DVD, distribute Worksheet 6: Riyadh's Story, to half of the group and Worksheet 7: Natasha's Story, to the other half. Give students a few minutes to look at the questions.

Ask students to watch the stories on the DVD with these questions in mind. Tell them that they will be discussing their responses in pairs or small groups after they have watched the DVD, but might like to make notes on the sheet.

Show Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Friendship - Riyadh and Natasha's Stories.**

Divide the students into smaller groups to discuss their responses, ensuring that those discussing Riyadh's story are together and those discussing Natasha's story are together. Ask each group to decide who will report the summary responses of the group back to the whole class group.

Allow about 10 minutes for this discussion.

Take feedback.

Note: *The worksheets provide students with the opportunity to explore the issues; there are not necessarily right or wrong answers. The teacher should pay particular attention to the way in which the discussions are taking place in the small groups and be aware that this topic may be a sensitive one for some students. If the small-group discussions are not being conducted responsibly it would be better to take the feedback from the whole group.*

Discussion Pointers:

- What was it like to hear Riyadh and Natasha tell their stories?
- What was similar about their experiences?
- What was different?
- If Riyadh or Natasha were part of your friendship group, how do you think you could support them?

3. Conclusion

Conclude the class by reminding students of the importance of friendship in young LGBT people's lives and to write one thing they might do to show support for someone who might be in Riyadh's or Natasha's situation in the future.

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

LESSON 4 WORKSHEET 6



RIYADH'S STORY



1 What do we learn about the kind of friendships Riyadh has in his life?

.....

2 How did his friends respond to his coming out?

.....

3 Were there any differences in the ways that his female and male friends reacted?

.....

4 Do you think his friends' responses are typical?

Why?

Why not?

5 What do Riyadh's friends tell us about the challenges / issues with which he had to deal?

.....

6 What impact did his friends have on his life?

.....

7 What impact did Riyadh have on the lives of his friends?

.....

8 If Riyadh was part of your close group of friends how do you think you and your friends would have reacted to his coming out?

.....



JUNIOR CYCLE

LESSON 4 WORKSHEET 7



NATASHA'S STORY



1 What kind of friendship has Natasha with her friend, Zoe?

.....

2 How did Zoe respond and react to Natasha's coming out?

.....

3 Do you think that Zoe's response is typical?

Why?

Why not?

4 What were the challenges that Natasha had to deal with?

.....

5 What impact did Zoe have on Natasha's life?

.....

6 If Natasha was part of your close group of friends, how do you think you and your friends would have reacted to her coming out?

.....



LESSON



JUNIOR CYCLE

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING (1)

This lesson links with the **Year 1 SPHE** module: **Belonging and Integrating** - 'Appreciating Difference' and 'Bullying is Everyone's Business' and **Year 2 SPHE** module: **Personal Safety** - 'Feeling Threatened'.

Aim

To increase the students' understanding of homophobic bullying and its effects.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Understand what is meant by homophobic bullying.
- (ii) Understand the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour.
- (iii) Be able to identify examples of homophobic bullying.

Student Materials

Lesson 5, Worksheet 8: Is it Homophobic Bullying?

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Prejudice and Discrimination
- **Natasha's story.**



Copies of the school's Anti-bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour.



Background Information for the Teacher

Attitudes towards homosexuality in Ireland have changed radically in recent years. Equality legislation prevents discrimination on the grounds of gender or sexual orientation (see p9); civil partnership for same-sex couples was introduced in 2010.

Despite this, some residual stigma still exists and consequently people who are LGBT can experience bullying and harassment. Many LGBT people report bullying and harassment to be particular problems in the school setting. When bullying is aimed at someone who is LGBT or believed to be LGBT, this is called homophobic bullying. In this resource homophobic bullying is understood to include transphobic bullying, which is bullying directed at someone because of their gender identity. For information on research findings see p30.

The purpose of this lesson is to increase awareness in young people and encourage them to reflect on their attitudes and behaviour.

Recent Research on Homophobia in Irish Schools

Survey of Teachers⁵

- 79% aware of homophobic bullying in their schools.
- 41% found this type of bullying more difficult to deal with.
- 90% said their school's anti-bullying policy did not mention homophobic bullying.

Supporting LGBT Lives⁶

- 58% of LGBT people reported the existence of homophobic bullying in their schools.
- 40% verbally threatened by fellow students.
- 25% physically threatened by their peers.
- 34% heard homophobic comments by teachers / other staff.
- 20% missed school because they felt threatened or afraid.
- 20% thought of leaving school.
- 27% of LGBT people self-harmed at least once.
- 50% of LGBT people under 25 seriously thought about ending their lives.
- 20% of LGBT people under 25 attempted suicide one or more times.
- "Those who experienced homophobic bullying and/or lack of acceptance by significant others in their lives as a consequence of their LGBT identification were particularly susceptible to depression, self-harm or suicidality."

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Introduce the lesson by outlining the aim and learning outcomes, referring to the Background Information for the Teacher. Remind students that the school has an anti-bullying policy which is in place to make the school a safe and friendly place for everybody. In this lesson the topic of homophobic bullying will be explored.

Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.

2. Definition of Homophobic Bullying

Remind students that they have learned in previous SPHE lessons that bullying can take a variety of forms. It includes verbal abuse, mimicry, insulting graffiti, threatened or actual physical and/or sexual assault,

spreading rumours, cyber-bullying and other forms of bullying. Bullying is, "Repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others."

In this lesson the term 'homophobic bullying' is understood to include bullying directed at lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people or people believed to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Homophobia affects:

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people
- Young people who are believed to be LGBT
- Young people who have LGBT family members.

Homophobia impacts on all young people as it gives the message that it is not ok to be who you are.

⁵ Norman, J., Galvin, M. & McNamara, G. (2006). *Straight Talk: Researching Gay and Lesbian Issues in the School Curriculum*. Centre for Educational Evaluation, DCU, Dublin.

⁶ Mayock, P., Bryan, A., Carr, N. & Kitching, K. (2009) *Supporting LGBT Lives: A Study of the Mental Health and Well-Being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People*. BeLonG To Youth Services & GLEN, Dublin.



3. DVD

Introduce Natasha's Story by telling students that they are going to look at how one girl was violently attacked and how that impacted on her.

Show the DVD: **Prejudice and Discrimination – Natasha's Story.**

Discuss the following questions with the full group, recording the key points on the board.

1. Why was Natasha attacked?
2. How do you think she felt?
3. Why didn't she want to go home?
4. Could members of the group attacking Natasha have prevented what happened and if so, how?
5. If you were a friend of Natasha's how could you have helped her after the attack?
6. Do you think that Natasha was being bullied? If so, why? What kind of bullying was this?

Note: *The attack on Natasha is so severe that it might be dealt with by Gardaí under the following legislation:*

Non Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997: Assault (S.2)

(1) A person shall be guilty of the offence of assault who, without lawful excuse, intentionally¹ or recklessly²

- (a) directly or indirectly applies force to or causes an impact on the body of another, or
- (b) causes another to believe on reasonable grounds that he is likely immediately to be subjected to any such force or impact.

Non Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997: Harassment (S.10)

(b) on conviction on indictment to a fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years or to both.

10. (1) Any person who, without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, by any means, including by use of the telephone, harasses another by persistently following, watching, pestering, besetting or communicating with him or her, shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) For the purposes of this section a person harasses another where -

- (a) he or she, by his or her acts, intentionally or recklessly, seriously interferes with the other's peace and privacy or causes alarm, distress or harm to the other, and

(b) his or her acts are such that a reasonable person would realise that the acts would seriously interfere with the other's peace and privacy or cause alarm, distress or harm to the other.

(3) Where a person is guilty of an offence under subsection (1), the court may, in addition to or as an alternative to any other penalty, order that the person shall not, for such period as the court may specify, communicate by any means with the other person or that the person shall not approach within such distance as the court shall specify of the place of residence or employment of the other person.

(6) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable—

- (a) on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €1904.61 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both, or
- (b) on conviction on indictment to a fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years or to both.

Public Order Act: Threatening, Abusive or Insulting Behaviour in Public Place (S.6)

(1) It shall be an offence for any person in a public place to use or engage in any threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour with intent to provoke a breach of the peace or being reckless as to whether a breach of the peace may be occasioned.

(2) A person who is guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €634.87 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months or to both.

4. Worksheet

Distribute Worksheet 8: Is it Homophobic Bullying? Working in pairs, ask students to discuss their responses to the questions and complete the worksheet.

Take feedback on each question; discuss student responses.

Note: *In discussing students' responses to the questions it is important to reinforce the message that all bullying behaviour is wrong because of the very serious way in which people can be affected by it. In this lesson we are focusing on homophobic bullying but the same basic messages apply to all bullying.*

Discussion Pointers:

- What effect do you think homophobic bullying has on someone?

Read out some of research findings on p8 and p30.

Complete the activity by reminding students of the definition of 'homophobic bullying': **Homophobic bullying is when bullying is directed at others because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender or believed to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.**

Remind students of the school's anti-bullying policy and code of behaviour.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, ask students to think about the importance of seeking help when in difficulty and, based on Natasha's experience, to write one helpful suggestion they could make to a friend who was experiencing bullying in their own life.

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

LESSON 5 WORKSHEET 8



IS IT HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING?

	BEHAVIOUR	YES	NO	NOT SURE
1	Darren constantly bumps into Paul and knocks his books to the floor			
2	Sophie pushes Tara again in the corridor			
3	Mark keeps sneering at Jack's schoolbag and says it looks like a girl's			
4	Sean and Dave keep mimicking the way Michael walks			
5	Every time a student answers a question three students say "that's so gay"			
6	Jane whispers negative comments about Sarah to other girls in the class			
7	Leanne and Grainne spread rumours about Emily being lesbian			
8	Pat and his friends keep asking Jim about his sexuality			
9	Louise and her friends refuse to let Joanne sit beside them because they say she's different			
10	Every time Sinead comes into the room a group of girls look at her, make a joke about lesbians and laugh			
11	Two boys gang up on another boy they have seen wearing make up at the weekend			
12	Martin continually makes comments on Facebook about one student being gay			
13	Ciaran keeps touching James in a way that makes him feel uncomfortable. Other boys join in "the fun" by laughing			
14	"Mary is a slut" is written on every door in the toilets			
15	Ruth and her friends go to the cinema on Friday night but deliberately leave Aisling out again			
16	Philip gets others in the class to stop talking to Ross since he was picked as captain of the school team			
17	On Monday Karen stops talking to Jemma and by the end of the week no one is talking to her			
18	Anna spreads rumours that Clodagh fancies Barbara			
19	John keeps texting James nasty messages calling James gay			
20	Someone keeps writing 'lezzie' on Michelle's books			

JUNIOR CYCLE

LESSON

6



JUNIOR CYCLE

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING (2)

This lesson links with **Year 1 SPHE** module: **Belonging and Integrating** - 'Appreciating Difference' and 'Bullying is Everyone's Business', **Year 2 SPHE** modules: **RSE** - 'Peer Pressure and Other Influences' and 'Making Responsible Decisions' and **Personal Safety** - 'Feeling Threatened' and **Year 3 SPHE** module: **Personal Safety** - 'Help Agencies'.

Aim

To encourage students to support peers who are experiencing bullying, in particular homophobic bullying, and help them to learn how to do this safely.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Know how to act safely as an ally to someone who is being bullied.
- (ii) Know the importance of telling a responsible adult and getting support if they are concerned about bullying.

Student Materials

Lesson 6, Worksheet 9: What Could I Do or Say? One card from the worksheet for each group of students.



Background Information for the Teacher

Sensitivity is needed in addressing this topic as there may be students in the class who have been bullied in the past or who are currently victims of bullying. There may also be students present who were, or are, perpetrators of bullying.

The lesson continues the theme of homophobic bullying, this time focusing on what someone can do if they see bullying taking place. Students should be reminded of the school's anti-bullying policy and of the procedures to be followed in the event that a student experiences bullying or is aware of others being bullied. The topic of bullying will have already been addressed elsewhere in SPHE.

When bullying happens people other than the victim are also affected (friends, family, others in the class, those who see bullying going on and the bully him/herself). Knowing how to respond to bullying and having the skills to intervene in a safe way when one witnesses it helps to eliminate bullying.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

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

2. Brainstorm Activity

Introduce the activity by referring to the last class, where students explored the ways in which bullying behaviour might affect someone (Natasha's story in the DVD).

As a brainstorm activity or working in pairs or groups of three ask students to complete the sentence:

'Homophobic bullying is wrong because...'

Take feedback, discuss students' responses and write key words on the board.

Note: In discussing students' responses to the question it is important to reinforce the message that all bullying behaviour is wrong because of the very serious way in which people can be affected by it. In this lesson we are focusing on homophobic bullying but the same basic messages apply to all bullying.

3. Discussion

Introduce the activity by reiterating that those witnessing bullying may also be affected and have a responsibility to do something to stop the bullying. Ask students what happens when they see someone being bullied - for any reason, not just homophobic bullying. Do they walk away? Join in? Pretend they haven't seen it? Why do they react like this and how do they feel? Some may want to help.

Note: A person who wants to stop the bullying is termed an 'ally'. Explain that before someone can intervene as an ally it is important to know when a situation involves bullying and when it doesn't.

This activity provides an opportunity for students to explore ways in which they could be an ally to someone who is a victim of homophobic bullying, or any other kind of bullying.

Divide students into small groups. Give a different scenario from Worksheet 9: What Could I Do or Say? to each group.

Ask students to think about the role of an ally and decide how an ally would respond in that scenario.

Take feedback. Discuss the range of responses with the whole class. In doing so emphasise the importance of taking a stand when we see someone's rights being infringed. Learning new ways of responding to bullying situations can help eliminate homophobic bullying both in school and in life outside school.

4. Safe Ways of Being an Ally

In being an ally no one is expected to put themselves at risk so it is important to act safely in these situations. Ask the students to revisit the scenario and think of

what might stop them being an ally in that particular situation.

Take feedback on the board.

Note: Include the following, if not mentioned: fear (of being hurt physically, excluded by others, slagged, being the next victim); feeling that it's someone else's responsibility; that you will have no support from others; thinking the person being bullied will get over it.

Explain that there are lots of things that an ally can do to help stop bullying. Others have responsibility in this regard too. Knowing what to do and who else to involve will support you in your role as an ally.

a) If time allows, a quick brainstorm activity could help establish students' thinking about what they would and would not do if they witnessed bullying. You could then add to it from the 'Dos and Don'ts' below.

Or

b) Provide students with a list of 'Dos and Don'ts' and invite them to complete the statement at the end.

Dos and Don'ts

- DO get help if you witness a fight or attack.
- DO tell a responsible adult when you know a student is being bullied. It is not 'ratting'. Someone's safety is at risk.
- DO include people who are being excluded.
- DO NOT join in bullying behaviour (laughing, sneering, slagging, etc).
- DO NOT cheer on bullying or fighting.
- DO NOT stay in a dangerous situation.
- DO NOT gang up on someone you think is bullying others.

5. Conclusion

Invite students to complete the following sentence in their journals:

'Mindful of what I have learned in this lesson, one thing I might do in the future if someone is being bullied is...'

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

LESSON 6 WORKSHEET 9



WHAT COULD I DO OR SAY?

Michael has recently come out in school. Sean and Dave (not close friends) heard about this and keep mimicking the way Michael walks and talks.

- What could you do to help Michael?
- What could you say?
- What would you like other allies to do to support you as an ally?
- What would you like them to say?

Mary has recently moved from another school and is now in your class. Someone is spreading a rumour that Mary was bullied in her last school because she is lesbian. Mary has recently found the word 'lezzie' scribbled on her books.

- What could you do to help Mary?
- What could you say?
- What would you like other allies to do to support you as an ally?
- What would you like them to say?

Every time Sinead comes into the room a group of girls look at her, make a joke about lesbians and laugh. Sinead is getting fed up with this and it upsets her at times.

- What could you do to help Sinead?
- What could you say?
- What would you like other allies to do to support you as an ally?
- What would you like them to say?

Jack is a quiet natured boy. John and Danny keep slagging him about his sexuality.

- What could you do to help Jack?
- What could you say?
- What would you like other allies to do to support you as an ally?
- What would you like them to say?

Darren is an enthusiastic student who loves history. Every time he answers a question three students say "that's so gay" in a way that the teacher cannot hear but those around Darren can.

- What could you do to help Darren?
- What could you say?
- What would you like other allies to do to support you as an ally?
- What would you like them to say?

Joanne is constantly receiving anonymous homophobic comments as text messages on her phone.

- What could you do to help Joanne?
- What could you say?
- What would you like other allies to do to support you as an ally?
- What would you like them to say?

LESSON

7



JUNIOR CYCLE

COMING OUT TO OTHERS

This lesson links with the **Year 3 SPHE** modules: **Communication Skills** - 'Learning to Communicate', **RSE** - 'Relationships - What's Important?' and 'The Three Rs - Rights, Respect and Responsibilities', and **Personal Safety** - 'Help Agencies'.

Aim

To enable students to explore the possible impact on young LGBT people of coming out to others and to identify ways in which they can support themselves and be supported by others.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have a greater understanding of the issues involved in coming out to others.
- (ii) Be able to identify ways in which a young LGBT person could support themselves through this process.
- (iii) Be able to identify ways in which a young LGBT person could be supported by others.

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Coming Out to Others – Jamie, Patrick and Riyadh's Stories.



Background Information for the Teacher

Lesson 3 must be taught before this lesson. In Lesson 3 the process of coming out is explained as being a process which happens over time. It begins with someone recognising and accepting their own identity. This process is called 'coming out to self'. The next stage is referred to as 'coming out to others' and happens when a person who is LGBT decides to tell other people, or one other person, about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

This is not usually one event, but a series of decisions. In some cases people are 'out' in some aspects of their lives but not in others; for example, some may be out in their personal lives but not in school/work or may be out with their friends and not their family.

This lesson looks at the impact on young LGBT people of receiving both positive and negative responses. It invites students to consider how young LGBT people might support themselves to come out safely and also how other people might support them.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Remind students that they have already explored issues around 'coming out to self'. Use the Background Information for the Teacher above to explain what is meant by 'coming out to others'.

Remind students of ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.



2. DVD

Explain to students that in this lesson they will explore the challenges faced by three young people, Riyadh, Jamie and Patrick, in telling other people about their sexual orientation.

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Coming Out to Others – Jamie, Patrick and Riyadh’s Stories.**

Divide students into groups of three and ask them to discuss the following questions:

1. How do you think Jamie felt before and after he told his mother?
2. How do you think Patrick felt about his father’s reaction?
3. How do you think Riyadh felt before and after he told his father?

Take feedback from the groups.

Note: *Remind students that although Patrick’s dad asked him if he was gay, it is best to avoid questioning people directly about their sexuality and instead create a relationship in which they can feel safe to say what they want when they are ready to do so.*

The process of coming out to others may be a difficult and painful one for some young people. Not every young LGBT person gets a positive response from people they choose to tell and sometimes even people who love them may, for various reasons, have difficulty accepting the news. The support provided by BeLonG To to young people going through this process can be explained.

Discussion Pointers:

- Are young people who come out to others taking a risk?
- Why? (Refer to research on p8 and p30).
- How can they make the process of coming out safer for themselves?
- How can we in our school make it safer?

3. Reflection

Link the next activity to the last question above by explaining to students that as a society we have an obligation to behave responsibly towards people, whatever their sexual orientation or gender identity. This means that each of us individually needs to think about our attitudes.

Ask the students to imagine that they are LGBT and have decided to tell another person. Write down:

1. What qualities they would look for in that other person.
2. How they would like that person to respond.

If there is time, students can be asked to read out their responses.

4. Conclusion

Conclude the lesson by reading the following extract from the novel ‘Flick’ by Geraldine Meade (Little Island, 2011).

In the story a young Irish girl called Flick realises that she is a lesbian but struggles against it for a long time. Eventually she tells her mum and dad. Her dad responds by saying:

I’d love to tell you that everything will be fine, that people won’t react badly or say hurtful things; some people probably will. But you can’t let those few people and their narrow-mindedness stop you from living the life you want to lead. If you do you’ll end up so unhappy and we just couldn’t bear to see you like that.’ He pauses. ‘Just remember that the people who matter will love you as they always have, no matter what, and they will understand that this is part of who you are.

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

LESSON

8



JUNIOR CYCLE

RELATIONSHIPS

This lesson links with the **Year 3 SPHE** modules: **Friendship** - 'Boyfriends and Girlfriends' and **RSE** - 'Relationships: What's Important?'

Aim

To enable students to reflect on the development of romantic relationships for young LGBT people.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Appreciate the links between friendships and romantic relationships.
- (ii) Come to appreciate some of the issues faced by young people who are LGBT in developing romantic relationships, as well as the benefits.

Student Materials

Lesson 8, Worksheet 10: Romantic Relationships (one per student).
Lesson 8, Worksheet 11: Natasha and Grace (one per group of 3 students).

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Relationships – Natasha.



Background Information for the Teacher

The quality of a person's relationships has an impact on their sense of self. Healthy relationships contribute to good self-esteem and personal growth; unhealthy relationships can damage health and self-esteem. One of the key developmental tasks in adolescence is to gain experience and competence in building peer relationships and friendships. Young people learn relationship skills, such as building trust and good communication, through their family relationships and their friendships.

As the majority of teenagers are only beginning to experience romantic and sexual attraction, they are often unaware of the skills involved in building a healthy relationship and of the benefits of allowing physical and emotional aspects of a relationship to develop together. The value of supportive relationships and the process involved in developing them is similar for all young people whatever their sexual orientation or gender identity.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

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

2. Reflection

Remind students of previous lessons on friendship in SPHE and/or RSE, particularly Lesson 4 in this resource. Invite students to spend a few minutes reflecting on some attributes they value in a friend.

Ask students to call out some of the words that come to mind and write them on the board.

3. Worksheet

Give each student a copy of Worksheet 10: Romantic Relationships. Explain that the worksheet has a number of statements made by young people when asked why a romantic relationship was important for them. Ask each student to tick the five statements that they consider most important. They may add statements of their own if they prefer.

In groups of three, ask students to share as much as they wish from the worksheet. Then, as a group, consider three similarities and three differences between a 'friendship' and a 'romantic relationship'.

Take feedback, record on the board and discuss with the full group.



4. DVD

Explain to students that they will now see a section of the DVD in which Natasha tells her story, about her relationship with a girl called Grace.

Allowing students to remain in their small groups, give each group a copy of Worksheet 11: Natasha and Grace. Ask them to read the questions and reflect on them while they are watching the DVD.

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Relationships – Natasha.**

Allow about five minutes for students to discuss the questions on the worksheet.

Take responses and facilitate discussion.

5. Conclusion

Conclude by asking students to reflect on the following two sentences and to complete them in their journals:

1. 'I think developing a relationship is challenging for young straight people because ...'
2. 'I think developing a relationship is challenging for young LGBT people because ...'

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

LESSON 8 WORKSHEET 10



ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

When young people were asked why they liked being in romantic relationships these were some of the reasons they gave:

It feels good

Everyone is doing it so I should too

Somebody with whom to have fun

It helps you to get to know yourself

Have somebody to kiss and cuddle

Have someone with whom to talk things through

It prepares you for more serious relationships later

Feeling close and special to someone

It's fun exchanging text messages

Make plans for a future together

Know you could tell them anything

To learn to understand and listen to another

Holding hands

Falling in love

Feeling a connection

Learning how another person's opinions, emotions and needs can be different from yours

Other

.....

LESSON 8 WORKSHEET 11



NATASHA AND GRACE



1 As a child, how did Natasha feel about her future?
What were her hopes and dreams?

.....
.....

2 How did Natasha's realisation of her childhood dreams change as she grew up? How did she feel about that?

.....
.....

3 What was it that changed Natasha's thinking and helped her to accept that she could have all the things she wished for as a child?

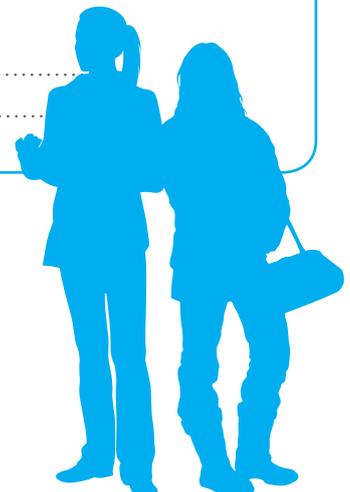
.....
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4 Natasha tells us that Grace is 'her kind of person' and that is why she loves her. What do you think Natasha means by this?

.....
.....

5 What challenges might Natasha and Grace face if they choose to develop their relationship further?

.....
.....



LESSON

9



JUNIOR CYCLE

TRANSGENDER IDENTITY

This lesson links with the **Year 3 SPHE** module: **RSE** - 'Body Image' and 'Where Am I Now?'

Aim

To enable students to appreciate the challenges faced by transgender people and develop supportive attitudes towards them.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have a greater awareness of gender identity and transgender people and look at some of the challenges and successes involved for one particular young person.
- (ii) Appreciate the importance of accessing support and know where to find it.
- (iii) Consider how they might support a person who is transgender.

Student Materials

Lesson 9, Worksheet 12: Alex's Story.



Background Information for the Teacher

Lesson 2 should be taught before this lesson. In Lesson 2, the issue of gender was explored. The meaning of the words 'sex', 'gender' and 'transgender' was explained (see p17). Students considered some of the ways in which gender stereotypes can affect people.

The focus of this lesson is to give more attention to the experience of being transgender. Given that there are certain expectations on all of us to conform to male or female stereotypes, the challenges for someone who is transgender are even greater.

A transgender person is someone whose gender identity differs from the sex they were born with. The world may see them as male or female, but inside their gender identity may be completely different. Someone who appears to be a boy may identify as a girl, or vice versa. Some transgender people feel that neither label fits them. This can be very challenging and confusing for a young person and their family. Organisations such as the Transgender Equality Network in Ireland (TENI) and BeLonG To provide information and support.

Many transgender people are aware of their gender identity at a very early age. Not all transgender people seek to have surgical gender reassignment.

The term 'trans' is a shortened version of the word transgender. A more detailed list of the vocabulary used in relation to transgender issues is contained in Senior Cycle Lesson 5.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

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

Remind students of the earlier lessons on coming out. Note that the processes of understanding gender identity and coming out as transgender are very similar to the experience of a young gay or bisexual person. In all instances, support, respect and a willingness to learn on the part of other people is necessary.

Ensure that students understand the terms 'gender identity' and 'transgender'.

2. Discussion

Invite students, in pairs or small groups, to discuss:

'What challenges do you think might be faced by somebody whose gender identity is different from their physical sex at birth?'

Take feedback.

Discussion Pointers:

- Is there stigma attached to being transgender?
- Why might a person in this situation feel very isolated?
- What support would be needed from family and friends?

3. Worksheet

With students in the same groups, distribute Worksheet 12: Alex's Story. Ask students to consider the story and discuss the questions that accompany it.

Take feedback on the discussion.

4. Conclusion

Ask students to reflect on the following question and write a response in their journals:

'If there was a trans student in your school or class, how could you give them your support?'

If there is time, ask students to read out their responses.

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

LESSON 9 WORKSHEET 12



ALEX'S STORY

Alex was born physically a boy, but from a young age she always felt that she was a girl.
As she became older she became increasingly sure that she was a girl.

'Dad, I've already told you, I'm a girl, so stop saying he!'

For years, Alex had been telling her parents that, despite being physically male, she was really a girl.

By the time she was 11, she wore only girls' clothes at home or when going out with her family at the weekends. Over the years, her parents came to accept that wearing girls' clothes was very important to Alex and as strangers they met just seemed to accept Alex was a girl, her parents stopped contradicting them.

Alex found some things very hard in school; for example, the rule that boys and girls had to wear different uniforms and the way that teachers often divided students into separate groups or queues as boys and girls. At age 14, Alex began to ask teachers to use the pronoun 'she' and insisted on wearing a skirt to school. Some people jeered Alex, but she had two really good friends, Sean and Fidelma, who helped her a lot.

Alex's parents began to get more and more worried, but at the same time they loved Alex and wanted to support her. They asked the advice of their doctor, who was very helpful and suggested that the family get in touch with the LGBT youth group based in a nearby Midlands town.

Alex was really happy when it turned out that there were other transgender young people attending the group. She found it really supportive to be able to talk about her experiences, to hear from others and to discuss issues as they came up for her. It was also great just to be able to hang out with people of her own age who accepted her and treated her like the woman she always knew she was.

- 1 How did Alex feel about her gender growing up?
- 2 How does Alex come across in the story? Does she seem happy?
- 3 How does she feel about being female?
- 4 What supports do her parents give her?
- 5 How do you think her friends Sean and Fidelma might have helped her?
- 6 What do you learn about being 'trans' from Alex's story?

LESSON

10



JUNIOR CYCLE

SUPPORTS AND CELEBRATIONS

This lesson links with the **Year 3 SPHE** module: **Personal Safety** - 'Help Agencies'.

Aim

To enable students to develop an awareness of the range of supports available to LGBT young people.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Understand the value of support agencies such as BeLonG To to young LGBT people.
- (ii) Understand the language associated with LGBT celebrations and protest.
- (iii) Further develop a sense of empathy and support for young LGBT people.

Student Materials

Lesson 10, Worksheet 13: Supports and Celebrations.

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Supports and Celebrations.



 Access to BeLonG To's website,
www.belongto.org.



Background Information for the Teacher

This lesson provides information for students on the organisation BeLonG To, whose role is to provide support and encouragement for young people who are LGBT. It also explains the importance of Gay Pride to the LGBT community.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

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

Recap on what students have learned in previous lessons. Remind students of Lessons 5 and 6 and how young LGBT people can experience bullying and harassment. For this reason the support of organisations such as Belong To is particularly important.

2. Discussion

In pairs or in groups of three, ask students to discuss the following questions:

1. What kind of support do you get in your life from your family and friends?
2. What about your community? How does it support you? Are you a member of any clubs or do you take part in any activities in your community?
3. How do you celebrate your national identity in public (St. Patrick's Day, international days, for example)?
4. Do you think LGBT young people need similar support and celebration in their lives?

Take feedback from students and write key words on the board, emphasising that celebrations, particularly of who we are - our identity - are part of life and in celebrating we recognise our individuality and uniqueness.

3. DVD and Worksheet



Explain to students that often people who are LGBT feel their identity is not recognised or celebrated. For that reason Gay Pride marches are held in many countries throughout the world, including Ireland.

The organisation BeLonG To helps young people to participate in celebrations such as Gay Pride and also provides a safe place where young LGBT people can meet, make friendships and discuss their problems.

Give each student a copy of Worksheet 13: Supports and Celebrations and ask them to keep the questions in mind while viewing the DVD.

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Supports and Celebrations.**

Give students time to complete the worksheet and to discuss the questions in pairs or small groups.

Take feedback from the groups and use this as an opportunity to allow students to clarify their understanding of the terms 'pride', 'rainbow flag', etc.

4. Conclusion

Show students the BeLonG To website – www.belongto.org.

Ask students to write three reasons why they think Gay Pride and BeLonG To might help someone who is LGBT.

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

LESSON 10 WORKSHEET 13



SUPPORTS AND CELEBRATIONS

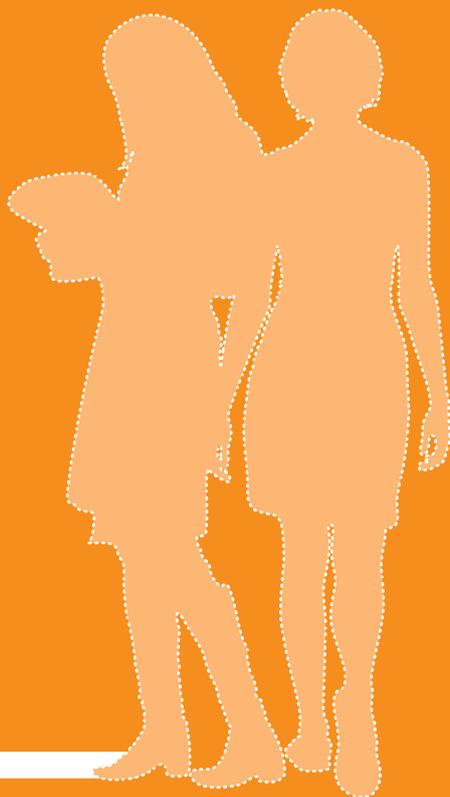


<p>What does BeLonG To offer young people?</p>	
<p>What do Patrick and the other young people say they like about the Pride celebration?</p>	
<p>What does diversity mean to you? What examples of diversity did you see in the DVD?</p>	
<p>Why is the debs or prom that most young people go to important to them?</p>	
<p>Why do you think the LGBT Prom is such a supportive celebration? What do people say about it in the DVD?</p>	
<p>What other supports are mentioned?</p>	

NOTES

SENIOR CYCLE

- Lesson 1 Understanding Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Lesson 2 Coming Out to Self
- Lesson 3 Coming Out To Others
- Lesson 4 Relationships
- Lesson 5 Transgender Identity
- Lesson 6 Prejudice and Discrimination (1)
- Lesson 7 Prejudice and Discrimination (2)
- Lesson 8 Supports and Celebrations



TEACHING THE SENIOR CYCLE LESSONS

These lessons are designed to be taught in the context of a wider SPHE programme, in the order in which they appear. Depending on the structure of a school's SPHE programme, a teacher may wish to select from the lessons, or teach them in a different order.

If a teacher decides to change the order, he or she is advised to ensure that students are familiar with the ground rules and language contained in Lesson 1.

If Senior Cycle students have received no previous lessons on sexual orientation and transgender, it may be advisable to first teach some of the Junior Cycle lessons, in addition to Senior Cycle Lesson 1.

All SPHE lessons should be introduced with a reference to ground rules and boundaries, but it is particularly important in relation to this topic, given some of the negative attitudes and stereotypes that still prevail in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Ground rules might include listening, being respectful of other people's views and not making fun of people.

Many of the lessons use group work methods; this requires a very safe and supportive classroom environment. If it is not possible to provide such an environment, the teacher may wish to adapt the methodologies and use more whole-class rather than small-group discussion.

Teachers should explain to the students that while the SPHE class provides an opportunity to discuss and share opinions, it is not the right place to disclose information that is personal or sensitive, either about oneself or about another person. If a student wishes to discuss something of a personal

or confidential nature they can be advised to talk to the teacher after the class, or to another trusted adult, or to contact an appropriate support organisation, such as those listed in Appendix 1. When discussing this topic teachers should be sensitive to the fact that some students in the class may be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or may have family members who are. However, teachers should not make assumptions about someone's identity, or ask direct questions.

As stated in the introduction (see p6) each school is responsible for ensuring that all SPHE/RSE resource materials are used in a way that is consistent with the ethos of the school, as articulated in the school's RSE policy. The teacher should be familiar with the school's RSE policy. It is possible to articulate the values inherent in the policy while at the same time facilitating students to discuss attitudes and values in a respectful way.

The age of consent to sexual intercourse, whether heterosexual or homosexual, is 17 for boys and girls.

The letters LGBT, standing for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, are used throughout the lessons.

In order to integrate these lessons with the school's Senior Cycle RSE programme, links to related lessons in the TRUST resource and the Senior Cycle Resource Materials for RSE (www.sphe.ie) are listed at the beginning of the lesson.

Teachers are advised to provide students with information about support organisations – see Appendix 1. The organisation BeLonG To is of particular relevance to students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

LESSON

1



SENIOR CYCLE

UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

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

Aim

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

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

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

Student Materials

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



Background Information for the Teacher

Sexuality

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

Sexual Orientation

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

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

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

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

Gender Identity

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

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

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

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

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

2. Discussion

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

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

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

3. Magazine Activity

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

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

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

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

4. Reading

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

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

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

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

Discussion Pointers:

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

5. Conclusion

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

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

LESSON

2



SENIOR CYCLE

COMING OUT TO SELF

(Lessons 2 and 3 should be taught as a sequence of two lessons)

Aim

To increase the students' understanding of what it is like for a young gay person to understand and accept their sexual orientation and be able to communicate it to others. This process is often referred to as 'coming out'.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Understand the process, for a young LGBT person, of coming out to themselves and others.
- (ii) Be able to understand and empathise with some of the difficulties involved in coming out.

Student Materials

Lesson 2, Worksheet 1: Coming Out To Self.

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Coming Out to Self and **Coming Out to Others.**



Background Information for the Teacher

'Coming out' is a process of a) understanding and accepting one's own sexual orientation - sometimes referred to as 'coming out to self' and b) developing the confidence to tell another person or other people about it - sometimes referred to as 'coming out to others'. The process is similar for someone who is transgender.

Recent research has found that the most common age at which young people realise they are LGB is 12, but that most will not disclose this for about five years. The study also found that the period in between realising one's sexual orientation and 'coming out' was often a difficult one for young people. They experienced fear of rejection by family and friends as well as isolation and harassment in school. People who are transgender often know their gender identity from an even younger age than 12.

Young people who are LGBT often experience stigma, social exclusion, bullying and harassment due to prejudices in society about those whose gender identity or sexual orientation is different from the mainstream. The stress created by these experiences may place LGBT people at increased risk of psychological distress, which is often referred to as minority stress. Minority stress can lead to mental health problems such as depression, low self-esteem, addiction and self-harm. Minority stress can also make it difficult for a young person to develop a positive sense of their own LGBT identity. Support, inclusion and affirmation of LGBT identity can counteract this. Research findings relating to this can be found on p8 and p30.

People can sometimes have particular difficulty in understanding bisexuality. The writer Robyn Ochs writes about the 'double discrimination' bisexual people can experience from both the heterosexual and LGBT communities.

This time of coming to terms with sexual orientation or gender identity can be a challenging one for young LGBT people, so it is important that they are supported and that if they do choose to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity, this disclosure is received with respect, understanding and acceptance.

This lesson explores issues faced by young people who are discovering that their sexual orientation is different from that of the majority of their peer group.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Outline the aim and learning outcomes, using some of the material from the Background Information for Teacher. Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.

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



2. DVD

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Coming Out to Self** and **Coming Out to Others**.

Discussion Pointers:

- How did the young people in the DVD feel about coming out?
- What made it difficult for them?
- What did you learn about coming out from their stories?

3. Worksheet

Explain that in this next activity students will focus on the experiences of Jamie, Zoe and Esther.

Divide students into small groups. Give each student a copy of Worksheet 1: Coming Out to Self. Ask students to read the comments at the top of the worksheet and to discuss the questions, making notes if they wish.

Appoint a spokesperson for the group.

Take feedback from small groups and conclude the discussion by reminding students that homosexuality and bisexuality are normal variations of sexual orientation and have always existed. Most of the problems experienced by LGBT people come from the prejudices and attitudes of people who are not LGBT.

Refer to the information on homophobic bullying in the Background Information for the Teacher.

4. Conclusion

Jamie says: 'It's a pretty lonely time. You constantly feel like you're different.'

Invite students to reflect on a time when they felt lonely or different and write down what they found helpful at that time. Students can be invited to say what they found helpful if they wish to do so.

LESSON 2 WORKSHEET 1



COMING OUT TO SELF



Zoe says: 'Why I didn't tell anyone was because it could ruin my whole life if I came out. I thought my friends would never speak to me again and my parents would kick me out.'

Jamie says: 'I think I realised when I might have been about 12 and I tried to deny it because I thought it was something to be ashamed of. It was a pretty lonely time. You constantly feel like you're different. There is a lot of guilt associated with it; you feel like you're letting your parents down, kind of. Because you're not going to give them grandchildren and all the rest...'

Esther says: 'I felt like I would be the black sheep of the family and, especially since I have a kind of Jewish background as well, that I wouldn't be accepted by my religion.'

1 How do you imagine Zoe and Jamie felt while they were trying to keep their orientation a secret?

.....
.....

2 What messages might they received about being gay/lesbian while they were growing up?

.....
.....

3 What was it like for Esther realising that she was bisexual?

.....
.....

4 What messages had Esther received from her religion?

.....
.....

5 What helped these three young people to accept themselves?

.....
.....

LESSON



SENIOR CYCLE

COMING OUT TO OTHERS

This lesson is a continuation of Lesson 2. The aim and learning outcomes are the same.

Student Materials

Lesson 3, Worksheet 2: Coming Out to Others.

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Coming Out to Others.



PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Remind students of the discussion from the previous class. Explain that students will consider some of the issues raised in the last class, but with a particular focus on coming out to others.

Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.



2. DVD

Explain to students that they are going to see a section of the DVD that they saw in the last lesson, but that the focus of the reflection and discussion will be more on what it was like for the young people to tell someone else about their orientation.

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Coming Out to Others.**

Ask for any comments on the DVD.

3. Worksheet

Give students Worksheet 2: Coming Out to Others and ask them to complete the worksheet questions individually before working in small groups to compare what they wrote down. Appoint a spokesperson for each group to give feedback.

Take feedback and facilitate discussion.

Note: Attitudes towards bisexuality can sometimes be more complex than attitudes towards homosexuality, with people taking the view that bisexuality is a phase, or that bisexual people want to have it every way. However, bisexuality is a recognised sexual orientation, which is a lifelong one for some people.

4. Brainstorm

Ask students to think about:

1. Why someone might decide not to come out.
2. Why someone might decide to come out.

Brainstorm the answers to both and write in two columns on the board.

Note: Answers to 1. might include: fear of being rejected, fear of intimidation or bullying, worrying that their family might be disappointed or hurt.

Answers to 2. might include: being tired of pretending to be someone they are not, because they are proud of who they are, to be accepted for who they are.

5. Conclusion

Ask students to reflect for a few minutes on how it feels to be accepted by people we love and who love us. Students should complete the sentence:

‘When I am accepted for who I am I feel...’

Remind students that Riyadh’s dad eventually came around and that this is true of many parents given time. There is a support group available for parents of LGBT young people (see Appendix 1).

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

LESSON 3 WORKSHEET 2



COMING OUT TO OTHERS



1 Riyadh and Jamie found it so difficult to tell their parents that they both wrote it down, Riyadh on a piece of paper and Jamie in an email that said 'I'm something beginning with g and ending in y.'

Why do you think this was?

.....
.....

2 All of the parents reacted in different ways. Why do you think this was?

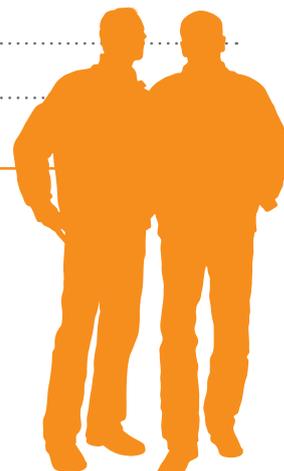
.....
.....
.....

3 How might the reaction of their parents have affected Jamie, Patrick and Riyadh?

.....
.....
.....

4 How do you think Esther's sister feels about her being bisexual?

.....
.....
.....



SENIOR
CYCLE

LESSON

4



SENIOR CYCLE

RELATIONSHIPS

This lesson links with **Senior Cycle RSE** Resource Materials, **Lesson 3** - 'Dealing with Feelings' and Lesson 12 - 'Loving Relationships'. It also links with **Trust**, **Lesson 1** - 'What we Value in Relationships', **Lesson 2** - 'Healthy Relationships', **Lesson 5** - 'When We Feel Hurt', **Lesson 8** - 'Intimacy', **Lesson 11** - 'Influences and Values' and **Lesson 13** - 'Responsible Relationships'.

Aim

To increase the students' understanding of same-sex attraction and relationships.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Reflect on some of the obstacles experienced by young LGBT people in relation to going out with someone.
- (ii) Have a better understanding of the value to young LGBT people of close same-sex relationships.

Student Materials

Lesson 4, Worksheet 3: Relationships.

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Relationships.



Background Information for the Teacher

In Lesson 1 students explored different aspects of sexuality. Being gay or bisexual involves a person's whole identity, including the biological, spiritual, cultural, psychological and social dimensions. There can be a tendency in society to see gay, lesbian or bisexual relationships solely in terms of sexual activity. However, same-sex relationships fulfill the same needs for those involved as does a heterosexual relationship. Such needs include physical and emotional intimacy, love, belonging, friendship, commitment.

See information on age of consent in 'Teaching the Senior Cycle Lessons' (p51).

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Begin by reminding students that they have explored different dimensions of one's sexuality in Lesson 1. Recap on these, if necessary. Outline the aim and learning outcomes. Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.

2. Discussion

Ask students to reflect for a few minutes on their own experience of falling in love or, if they have never been in love, to think about a film or a song about falling in love. How do people feel when this happens to them?

Ask students to name some feelings and put them on the board. They could include excitement, fear, happiness, sadness, desire, longing, insecurity, etc.

Ask the following questions and take responses:

1. Do we decide who we are attracted to or fall in love with, or does it just happen?
2. Do you think the feelings are the same or different in same-sex attraction?
3. What needs do loving relationships fulfill?



3. DVD

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Relationships**. Ask students if they have any comments or questions.

4. Worksheet

Ask students to form groups of three or four and to discuss the questions on Worksheet 3: Relationships.

Take responses to the questions from each group.

5. Conclusion

Ask students to reflect for a few minutes on one or two close, loving relationships in their own lives and how they benefit from these relationships.

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

LESSON 4 WORKSHEET 3



RELATIONSHIPS



Siobhán's Story

- 1 Does Siobhán seem confident in her identity as a lesbian? Why do you think this?
- 2 How do you imagine Siobhán's girlfriend feels about being unable to tell her parents she is lesbian?
- 3 How might this affect Siobhán's relationship with her girlfriend?

Riyadh's Story

- 1 How did Riyadh feel about the boy he describes in the DVD?
- 2 Do you think he was able to express his feelings to him? Why / why not?
- 3 How easy or how difficult might it be for two young men to express their feelings for one another in public, e.g. hold hands, kiss etc?

Esther's Story and Natasha's Story

- 1 What did the relationships with their partners bring to Esther and Natasha's lives?
- 2 Do you think the attitudes of other people towards same sex or bisexual relationships have an effect on those relationships?

LESSON

5



SENIOR CYCLE

TRANSGENDER IDENTITY

Aim

To enable students to understand transgender issues and introduce them to appropriate language for discussing these issues.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have an appropriate vocabulary for discussing transgender issues.
- (ii) Have developed some insights into the issues faced by people who are transgender.

Student Materials

Lesson 5, Worksheet 4: Transgender Vocabulary (copies for each student, plus word cards, see below).

Lesson 5, Worksheet 5: Mark's Story (optional).

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Transgender.**

Alternatively, the teacher may wish to use Junior Cycle Lesson 9, Worksheet 12: Alex's Story.



Background Information for the Teacher

The issue of gender identity was explored in Junior Cycle Lessons 2 and 9. This lesson looks at the experience of Mark, who is transgender.

A transgender person is someone whose gender identity differs from the sex with which they were born. The world may see them as male or female, but, inside, their gender identity may be completely different. Someone who appears to be a boy may identify as a girl, or vice versa. Some transgender people feel that neither label fits them. This can be very challenging and confusing for a young person and their family.

Many transgender people are aware of their gender identity at a very early age. Not all transgender people seek to have surgical gender reassignment.

The term 'trans' is a shortened version of the word transgender.

Sexual orientation is different from gender identity. Sexual orientation is about the attraction that people feel towards others. Trans people may be heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual.

There is a growing understanding and awareness of transgender issues. Information and support are available through organisations such as the Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) and BeLonG To (see Appendix 1).

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Introduce this lesson by reminding students of earlier lessons on gender and gender identity. Outline the aim and learning outcomes. Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.

2. Vocabulary

Divide the class into pairs and give each pair two word cards from Worksheet 4: Transgender Vocabulary. Ask them to write down what they think the word on each card means.

Give out the worksheet with the correct definitions.

Ask students to read out the correct definitions.

Ask students what they learned from this exercise.



3. DVD and Worksheet

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Transgender.

Give each student a copy of Worksheet 5: Mark's Story.

Option a) Ask them to think about the questions on their own and then discuss in small groups. Take feedback from the groups.

Or

Option b) Take responses from the whole class to the questions on the worksheet.

Discussion Pointers:

- Is there stigma attached to being transgender?
- Why might a person in this situation feel very isolated?
- What support would be needed from family and friends?

4. Conclusion

Ask students to each make one suggestion about ways in which they, individually and collectively, as members of the school community, could support someone who is transgender.

Remind students of the importance of talking to a trusted adult if they have concerns and of general supports, as well as those available for people who think they are transgender – BeLonG To, TENI, their family, a doctor or counsellor (see Appendix 1).

LESSON 5 WORKSHEET 4



TRANSGENDER VOCABULARY

Transgender people

Umbrella term for a variety of people who feel their gender identity does not match the biological sex with which they were born.

Trans

Short for transgender.

Gender

The word gender can mean biological sex – i.e. male or female. However, it also refers to the roles and behaviours that a society considers appropriate for males and females.

Gender identity

Our internal feeling of being male, female, both or neither.

Gender expression

How people show the world their gender, through dress, voice, mannerisms, hairstyles, etc.

Trans boy or trans man

Someone who was born a girl but who has realised that their gender identity is male.

Trans girl or trans woman

Someone who was born a boy but who has realised that their gender identity is female.

Transition

The term for the process a trans person may choose to go through to move from one gender to another.

Transsexual

A more clinical word used in the medical world; usually describes someone who has followed, or plans to follow, particular medical treatments.

Transphobia

Prejudice or discrimination towards trans people.

LESSON 5 WORKSHEET 5



MARK'S STORY



Voice-over:

'Although Mark was born female, he has always been unhappy living in a girl's body.'

Mark:

'Ever since I was really young I knew I was different, that I just didn't feel comfortable in my body. I was too afraid to tell my mom how I felt about it.'

Once we moved to Ireland, I had more chance of finding out that actually there was such a thing as transgender, where to get information and all that. I'm really happy to be here, because I sometimes think that had I stayed back home, I would have been on the street, completely unhappy.'

I do think that I always behaved as a boy. There were a lot of people who just assumed that I was a boy, which was very funny in a way because I heard what they said. And it made me happy, in that they did see me for who I really was.'

Questions

- 1 What sex was Mark when he was born?
- 2 How do you think Mark felt about himself when he realised he was transgender?
- 3 Why do you think he was afraid to tell his mother about it?
- 4 What difficulties might he have had at school if he had told someone?
- 5 What helped Mark to get through this difficult time in his life?

LESSON



SENIOR CYCLE

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION (1)

Lesson 6 and Lesson 7 should be taught as a sequence of two lessons.

This lesson links with **Senior Cycle RSE** Resource Materials, **Lesson 16** - 'Accepting Sexual Orientations' and **Lesson 17** - 'Sexual Harassment'.

Aim

To enable students to understand what is meant by prejudice and discrimination, especially as it applies to LGBT people, and familiarise them with the key provisions of the Equal Status Act.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have a greater understanding of prejudice and discrimination.
- (ii) Be more aware of the effects of prejudice and discrimination on young LGBT people.
- (iii) Have an understanding of the provisions of the Equal Status Act.

Teacher Materials

School's Code of Behaviour.



Background Information for the Teacher

A **stereotype** is a widely accepted judgement or bias about a person or group of people. We make assumptions and form stereotypical images based on messages conveyed by our family, society, the media or sometimes from our own personal experience. Stereotyping can lead to making judgements that may not be based on the reality of a particular person's life. Stereotyping can lead to prejudice about a person or group of people.

Prejudice is an unfavorable opinion or feeling. It is making a judgement or assumption about someone before having enough knowledge to be able to do so accurately or fairly. We sometimes call this 'judging a book by its cover'. Prejudice most often relates to negative attitudes toward individuals or groups of people because of race, social class, age, disability, appearance, religion, sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics.

Whereas prejudice is an idea or a feeling, **discrimination** is an action or a behaviour. Examples of this could be making a distinction in favour of or against someone, based on the category to which that person belongs, or is perceived to belong. An example would be apartheid in South Africa – black people did not have the same rights as white people and, for example, were often not allowed into the same restaurants or to use the same beaches.

Because prejudice and discrimination are common in all societies, many countries have introduced legislation making discriminatory behaviour illegal.

Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2011

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Prohibit discrimination on nine specific grounds
- Prohibit harassment on these grounds and sexual harassment
- Require reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities
- Allow for positive action.

The Equal Status Acts 2000–2011 prohibit discrimination on the following nine grounds:

- **The gender ground:** A man, a woman or a transsexual person.
- **The marital status ground:** Single, married, separated, divorced or widowed.
- **The family status ground:** Pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability.
- **The sexual orientation ground:** Gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual.
- **The religion ground:** Different religious belief, background, outlook or none.
- **The age ground:** This only applies to people over 18 except for the provision of car insurance to licensed drivers under that age.
- **The race ground:** A particular race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin.
- **The Traveller community ground:** People who are commonly called Travellers, who are identified both by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.
- **The disability ground:** This is broadly defined and includes people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions.

The legislation defines:

- **Discrimination** as: 'The treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation.'
- **Harassment** as: 'Any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds.'
- **Sexual harassment** as: 'Any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.'

Responsibilities of Schools

A person who is responsible for the operation of a school must not permit a student of a school (or anyone else who has a right to be in the school) to be harassed because of their sexual orientation or gender or to be sexually harassed. Schools are also liable for discrimination or harassment by an employee, whether or not it was done with the school's knowledge or approval.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Introduce the lesson by outlining the aim and learning outcomes. Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.

2. Discussion

Ask students to work in pairs. Write the following groups of people on the board and ask students to come up with a list of stereotypes or assumptions that we make about them:

- Germans and Italians
- Old people and young people
- Lesbian women and straight women.

Take feedback on the stereotypes/assumptions; e.g. Germans are all efficient, organised, like rules; Italians are easy-going, laid back, romantic; Lesbian women have short hair, look masculine, are aggressive; Straight women wear dresses, like children, like make-up.

Discussion Pointers:

- How helpful or unhelpful are these stereotypes?
- What problems can stereotyping cause?
- Why do we stereotype others?

Note: *Stereotyping and prejudice often stem from fear of difference and fear of becoming vulnerable to attack or discrimination ourselves if we take the side of a person or group who is different.*

3. Reflection

Explain to students that while some stereotyping can be quite harmless – i.e. thinking that all Italians like pasta – it can also reinforce collective negative attitudes and this can lead to discrimination, harassment and bullying of people who are considered to be different.

Ask students to reflect individually for a few minutes on groups of people in Irish society who are vulnerable to being badly treated. Ask them to write down their answers.

Take feedback and write answers on the board.

Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2011

Give students information on the Equal Status Acts, their purpose and the nine grounds. Explain the meaning of the words, 'discrimination', 'harassment' and 'sexual harassment'.

Compare the nine grounds with the list compiled by the students.

Discussion Pointers:

- Is there a need for this legislation?
- Why/why not?
- Is there a particular need in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity?
- Why/why not?
- Are there links between the school Code of Behaviour and the legislation?

4. Conclusion

Ask students to reflect on the lesson and to write down one thing that they learned.

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

LESSON

7



SENIOR CYCLE

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION (2)

This lesson is a continuation of Lesson 6. The aim and learning outcomes are the same.

Student Materials

Lesson 7, Worksheet 6: Jamie and Natasha.

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Prejudice and Discrimination.



A copy of the Stand Up DVD.
(Available at: www.belongto.org)

Take feedback on the questions and facilitate discussion.

Note: *The attack on Natasha is so severe that it might be considered by Gardaí under the heading of the Criminal Justice Public Order Act 1997. This makes it an 'offence for any person in a public place to use or engage in any threatening, abusive or insulting words with intent to provoke a breach of the peace'. It might also come under the Criminal Justice Act 2006, which defines anti-social behaviour as 'when a child causes harassment or significant or persistent alarm, distress, fear or intimidation' (see p31).*

When discussing with students how to help someone who is being bullied, refer to the Dos and Don'ts in Junior Cycle Lesson 6.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Begin by reminding students that they have already been introduced to the topics of prejudice and discrimination in the previous lesson. Remind students of the vocabulary used and introduce the phrase 'homophobic bullying'. Outline the aim and learning outcomes. Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.

2. DVD and Worksheet



Remind students that they have seen sections from the Growing Up LGBT DVD in previous classes. In this section two young people talk about their experience of homophobic bullying.

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Prejudice and Discrimination.**

Give each student a copy of Worksheet 6: Jamie and Natasha. Ask students to complete the worksheet on their own and then to discuss the answers in pairs.

3. 'Stand Up'

Show the short film 'Stand Up' from the BeLonG To website (www.belongto.org) and YouTube.

Invite students to consider how the supportive action of the class might affect 1). those being bullied and 2). those who are bullying.

Ask students:

'What responsibility do we each have in challenging discrimination and in upholding the equal status legislation?'

4. Conclusion

Ask students to complete the following in their journals:

1. 'When I see someone being bullied and discriminated against I feel...'
2. 'If someone I knew was being bullied I would...'

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

LESSON 7 WORKSHEET 6



JAMIE AND NATASHA



1 How do you think Jamie felt?

.....
.....

2 How do you think Natasha felt?

.....
.....

3 Did Jamie/Natasha experience an act of discrimination, a crime, or both?

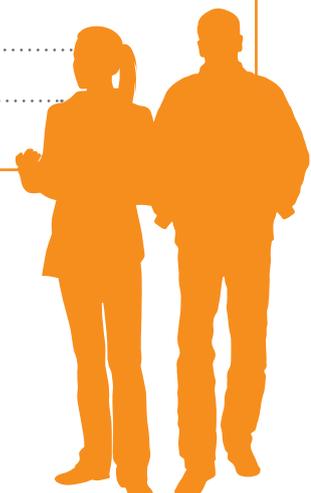
.....
.....

4 Could this happen in our community/school?

.....
.....

5 How could you help someone if you saw they were being treated badly because of their sexual orientation?

.....
.....



SENIOR
CYCLE

LESSON

8



SENIOR CYCLE

SUPPORTS AND CELEBRATIONS

Aim

To increase the students' awareness of the wider LGBT community and of the value of that community.

Learning Outcomes

Students will have a greater understanding of:

- (i) The support that LGBT youth groups offer to young people.
- (ii) How Pride and other events contribute to LGBT communities.

Student Materials

Lesson 8, Worksheet 7: Gay Pride.

Teacher Materials

Growing Up LGBT DVD:
Supports and Celebrations.



Background Information for the Teacher

This lesson offers students an opportunity to learn about the supports that are available across Ireland for young people who may be LGBT. Some young people have very supportive family members and friends. Unfortunately, for others this period of self-discovery is a time of isolation and fear. Irish research has shown that LGBT young people are most frequently aware of their sexual orientation or gender identity at 12 years of age. However, the majority do not tell another person until they are about 17 years of age. Those intervening five years are a time in which they are at serious risk of depression and other problems. Transgender people can become aware of their gender identity at an even younger age than 12.

BeLonG To Youth Services are available in over 12 locations around the country. BeLonG To is funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, together with the National Office for Suicide Prevention. Services offered by BeLonG To include one-to-one support for young people, safe spaces in which young people can meet their peers, leadership training and referrals to other professional services.

Lesson 8 teaches students about these vital resources. It also helps address the stigma experienced by many LGBT young people by showing that, despite ongoing inequality, LGBT people in Ireland have come together to create supportive communities. Indeed, LGBT celebrations (e.g. Pride) are now winning the support of many mainstream sections of Irish society.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Explain the aim and learning outcomes of the lesson and remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.

2. Discussion

Remind students of the earlier lessons that looked at the discrimination and bullying that young LGBT people can experience.

There are several organisations and groups that campaign for LGBT rights and support young LGBT people. In particular the organisation BeLonG To has a role in running youth groups around the country.

Discussion Pointers:

- Did you know there were support groups for young LGBT people?
- Why do you think they might be useful?

Explain what the groups are, using the definition below:

LGBT youth groups	Youth groups for LGBT young people and their friends. They are run by professional youth workers who offer advice and support. They encourage friendship among young people and develop youth leadership. BeLonG To's National Network includes LGBT youth groups in numerous locations around Ireland (see www.belongto.org for details).
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3. DVD

Show the Growing Up LGBT DVD: **Supports and Celebrations.**

Ask students:

1. Why do LGBT young people want to get involved with LGBT youth groups?
2. How do you imagine they feel after they have joined an LGBT youth group?

Take feedback from the class.

4. Gay Pride

Clarify that students know the meaning of the following terms:

Pride	Annual celebration of LGBT communities held around the world since the 1970s. In Ireland, most Pride events are in the summer and include parades with participation by many organisations (including LGBT youth groups), picnics, costumes and lots of rainbow flags.
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Rainbow Flag	The rainbow has represented LGBT people since 1978. It symbolises diversity and inclusion within LGBT communities and LGBT pride. The LGBT Rainbow Flag has six colours in this order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple.
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Gay Prom	A dance organised by BeLonG To and other LGBT youth groups to give LGBT young people a fun event similar to a Debs.
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Give students Worksheet 7: Gay Pride. Divide into small groups and ask them to discuss the questions.

Take feedback on responses.

5. Conclusion

Ask students to write down one thing they learned from this lesson.

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

LESSON 8 WORKSHEET 7



GAY PRIDE

Interviewer: Is Pride important to you?

Patrick: 'It's important to everyone. It's important to me and everyone else that comes to BeLonG To because it's the one day of the year that we can feel that we can be loud and proud. It's fun, but it's a protest at the same time about the inequality that we kind of have, just as gay people and lesbians, bisexual and trans people. We all have inequality and that's what we're trying to tackle with Pride.'

Voiceover: For some of the young people, this year is particularly exciting as it will be their first time marching in the parade.

Osaro: 'I know everyone doesn't like the Pride thing, gay or not, but, whatever. I'll judge for myself when I go there tomorrow, see how it's like. I'm not dressing up mad or anything - I'm just wearing my nice dress, that's it. I can't wait!'

Michael Barron, Director of BeLonG To Youth Service: 'I think it's not for everybody, that's all good. But for the young people it's a really big statement. It's just like saying, 'I am LGBT and this is me, here I am.' It's very unapologetic, which I think is really important. Young people are asked to be apologetic about their sexuality on a daily basis.'

- 1 What were the young people's hopes for Pride and the Gay Prom?
- 2 How do you imagine they felt while they were taking part in those events?
- 3 Were you surprised at the large number of people and organisations taking part?
- 4 In what ways does the Pride parade seem similar to and different from other parades, like the St. Patrick's Day parade?
- 5 Does the Pride parade suggest that LGBT people are being successful in achieving acceptance and equality in Ireland?

APPENDIX 1



Supports for young people and their families



LGBT-SPECIFIC SUPPORT

www.belongto.org is an organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people.

www.lgbt.ie is the National LGBT Helpline and can give information on LGBT support organisations throughout the country. Call 1890 929 539.

www.lovingouroutkids.org is a support organisation for parents of LGBT young people.

www.teni.ie is the Transgender Equality Network Ireland.

www.glen.ie is the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network, for support on policy and legislative issues.

There are lots of other organisations that can give you advice in confidence. You can find their details here - <http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie/>.

GENERAL SUPPORT

www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp is somewhere teens can go to for help and advice, as part of Barnados' mission to make Ireland a better place to be a child.

www.spunout.ie is Ireland's national youth website. It is a youth-led media initiative, covering all aspects of youth information including health, lifestyle and activism.

www.reachout.com is a support service for young people going through a tough time, with information on the issues that matter to young people, signposts to other services and the opportunity to join a supportive online, mental health community.

www.headstrong.ie is a national organisation working with communities to ensure that young people are better supported to achieve mental health and well being.

www.headsup.ie is an automated 24-hour text service set up to show young people where to get help.

www.aware.ie is a national voluntary organisation providing support to those experiencing depression.

www.childline.ie is a website providing support to children and teenagers of any age up to 18.

www.samaritans.ie provides 24-hour emotional support to anyone experiencing distress, despair or suicidal thoughts.

APPENDIX 2

Glossary

Bisexual:	Someone who is attracted to both males and females.
Coming out:	The process of understanding and accepting one's own sexual orientation and developing the confidence to tell another person or other people about it. The process is similar for someone who is transgender.
Discrimination:	The treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person in a comparable situation.
Gay:	Someone who is attracted to people of the same sex. Gay usually refers to males.
Gender:	The word gender can mean biological sex – male or female. However it is also used in a wider sense to refer to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for males and females.
Gender expression:	How people show the world their gender, through dress, voice, mannerisms, hairstyles, etc.
Gender identity:	The internal feeling of being male, female or, in some cases, of being both genders or neither gender.
Harassment:	Aggressive pressure or intimidation: Any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds.
Heterosexual:	Someone who is attracted to the opposite sex - females who are attracted to males and males who are attracted to females.
Internalised homophobia or transphobia:	This refers to the impact on individuals of negative or prejudiced attitudes in society towards people who are LGBT. This can create difficulties in developing self-acceptance or a positive sense of their own identity for some LGBT people.
Lesbian:	A female who is attracted to other females.
LGBT:	The term often used for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people.
Minority stress:	A term used to describe the mental health consequences of stigmatisation, social exclusion, discrimination and harassment of minority groups such as LGBT people. Minority stress places people at higher risk of developing mental health problems. The greater the support, inclusion and equality for LGBT people, the lesser the minority stress.
Sex:	The biological and physiological characteristics that define males and females. 'Male' and 'female' are sex categories. The word 'sex' is also used when referring to the act of sexual intercourse.
Sexual harassment:	Any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
Sexual orientation:	Attraction towards people of a particular sex. Three sexual orientations are generally recognised: heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual.
Straight:	A term commonly used to describe heterosexual people – people who are attracted to people of the opposite sex.

Trans:	Short for transgender.
Transgender people:	Transgender is the umbrella term used to describe those whose biological sex at birth is not in keeping with how they perceive their gender identity. Some may feel that their gender identity is not fixed.
Trans boy or trans man:	Someone whose biological sex is female at birth but who has realised that their gender identity is male.
Trans girl or trans woman:	Someone whose biological sex is male at birth but who has realised that their gender identity is female.
Transition:	The term for the process a trans person may choose to go through to move from one gender to another.
Transphobia:	Prejudice or discrimination towards trans people.
Transsexual:	A more clinical word used in the medical world; usually describes someone who has followed, or plans to follow, particular medical treatments.

NOTES

GROWING UP LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL and TRANSGENDER



A Resource for
SPHE and RSE

