

# Bridging Gaps - Families Love Each Other Resources Teachers/Facilitators Guide



## **Written by:**

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## **Introduction**

Positive Space Network and partner organizations used a consultative process with diverse youth and families to co-construct resources that can be used by school staff and community groups to help bridge the gap between LGBTQ+ ,language, culture, faith and race identities for youth and families. Ebook, youth and family tips sheets were produced in 7 languages: English, French, Spanish, Urdu, Punjabi, Arabic and Chinese. A conversation starter video is available on our website. The following activities and discussion question ideas may help facilitators and teacher use the resources with their students/ participants. Always consider how your audience will receive the resources and activities. Be careful not to “out” students and families or create further marginalization. Challenge hetero-normative , racist and sexist **and gender** assumptions in your approach and consider your own biases as you use these resources.

All resources are available for download from [www.positivespacenetwork.ca](http://www.positivespacenetwork.ca)

## When Families/**Caregivers** Ask for Assistance with LGBTQ+ Identities



### HOW TO TALK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH ABOUT SEXUAL AND GENDER IDENTITIES

- Listen more than you talk.
- Communicate with your child in the media that your child is comfortable in (e.g., text message, email).
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Start with "I love you no matter what."
- Teach your children to stand up to bullying of any kind.
- Share personal experiences and stories.
- Provide your child with information and resources that are also respectful of culture and faith.
- Keep an open mind.
- Ask questions to allow your child to express how your child feels.
- Ask a social worker, teacher, family member, or friend to help you have the conversation.
- Keep the conversation going.

The Ontario Human Rights Code protects people of different genders and sexual orientations from discrimination and harassment.

#### Resources

▶ <b>Kids Help Phone</b> www.kidshelpphone.ca 1-800-668-6868	▶ <b>LGBT Youth Line</b> www.youthline.ca 1-800-268-9688	▶ <b>Distress and Crisis Ontario</b> www.dcontario.org/centres.html 1-800-567-9699
▶ <b>Trans Lifeline</b> www.translifeline.org 1-877-330-6366	▶ <b>PFLAG Canada — Peel Chapter</b> www.pflagcanada.ca 1-888-530-6777	▶ <b>Rainbow Health Ontario</b> www.rainbowhealthontario.ca 416-324-4262

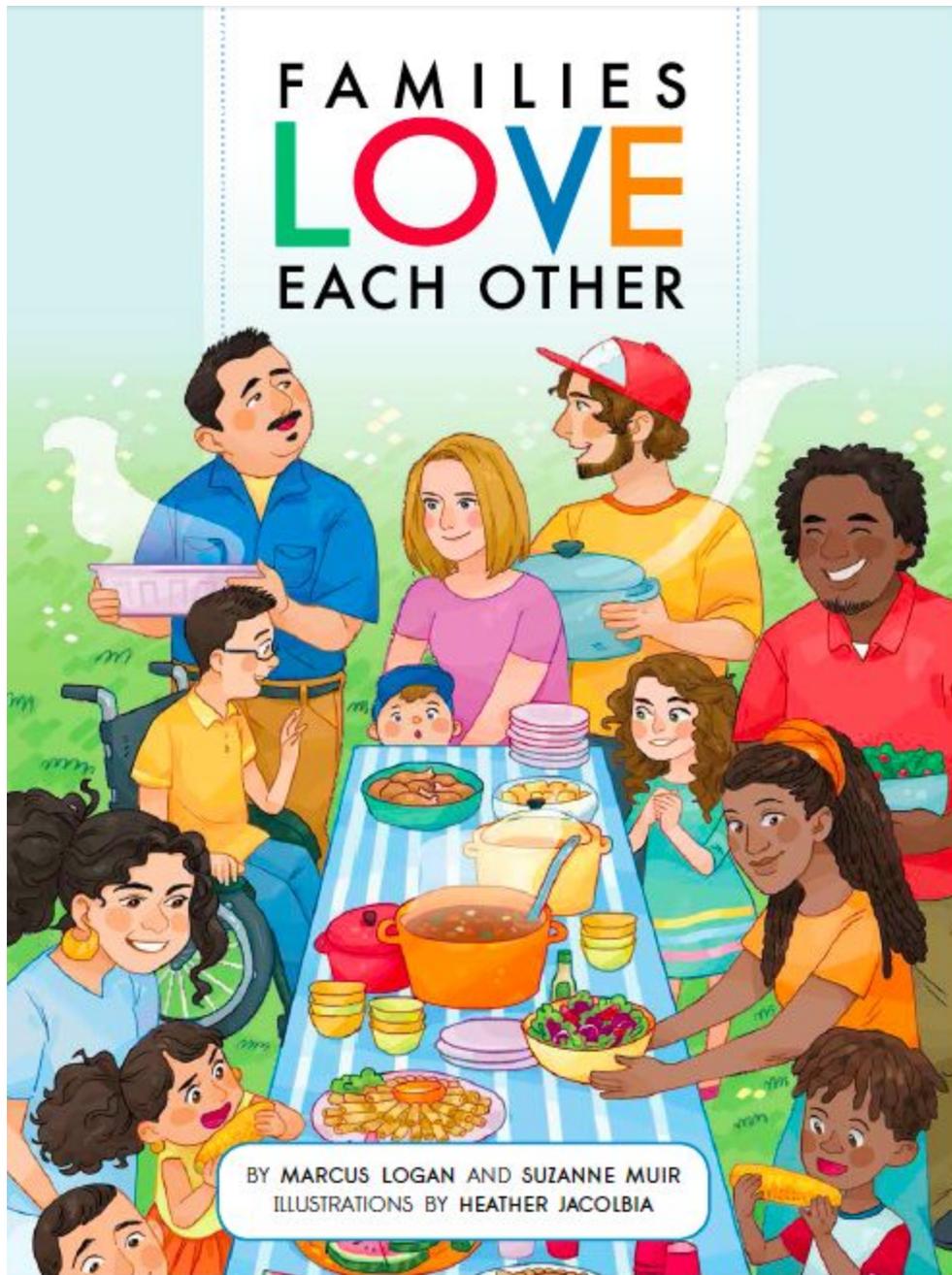
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- Thank the parent/caregiver for reaching out to you, and affirm their desire to support their child and learn how to best meet their needs.
- Provide the **Parent's/Caregiver's** Tips Sheets above in first language
- Acknowledge that it takes a circle of care to meet the needs of children, including **parents/caregivers** and teachers.

- Validate the range of feelings that **parents/caregivers** may have (e.g. feeling uncertain of how to best navigate these conversations with their child, feeling overwhelmed, or worried).
- Remind **parents/caregivers** that open dialogue with their child is the best way to understand one another and work together.
- Access the resources available to children and **parents/caregivers** within the school community and beyond (e.g. Child and Youth Counsellor, School Social Worker, local LGBTQ+ community resources, etc.).
- Help to actively facilitate the **family's/caregiver's** involvement with appropriate resources and supports (e.g. A personal introduction to the school social worker; e.g. rather than passing along the phone number of a local support group, offer to make the first phone call together with the **parent/caregiver** or student. This will help the **parent/caregiver** to feel supported, and it will help boost your knowledge of local resources!).
- Treat sensitive information with respect, and do not share with other staff members about a child's sexual orientation **and/or gender identity** without their permission.
- Use active listening skills (**teach staff to use active listening**)
- Set up systems for open dialogue. - Refer parent(s)/caregiver(s) to support networks.
- Offer to set up meetings to help families/caregivers navigate sensitive conversations.



**Families Love Each Other Ebook Discussion Questions:** The teacher can ask these questions as part of a full class discussion or can ask students to pair up and to discuss each question with their partner.

### **Discussion Questions Grades 1-3**

1. Do you and your **family/guardians** ever cook together? If so what do you make? Who is the person who does the most cooking in your **home**?

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***Positive Space Network 2016***

2. Does your family have special meals? What are they? Why does your family have these special meals?
3. What is your favourite dish or meal? Describe it in detail.
4. What is your favourite food? What food do other family members like?
5. Do you eat anything special on your birthday? If so, describe it. If not, what would you choose to eat on your birthday if you could choose anything?
6. Do you have a bedtime routine? What do you do each night to get ready for bed? Explain what you do and which family members are involved.
7. What does your family celebrate together? How do they celebrate? What do they do?
8. What family members attend this (these) celebration(s)?
9. Does your family have traditions? What are they?
10. Does your family help others? What do they do to help others?
11. How do the members of your family show love for one another? What do they say? What do they do?

### **Discussion Questions Grades 4-8**

1. What special foods does your culture enjoy? List and describe them.
2. Where in your home do you eat? Is there a certain place in your home where you usually eat? Does your family eat all together?
3. What time do you often have dinner at?
4. Does your supper routine change on the weekend? Does it change in the summer? If so, how? What are other reasons that your dinner routine changes?
5. What would you like to learn how to cook and why?

6. If you were to look for recipes, where would you look? (For example: online, in a cookbook, at the library, etc.)
7. What is your bedtime routine? What things do you do to get ready for bed? Do you change your bedtime routine on the weekends or in the summer?
8. What celebrations does your family take part in? Which family members take part in the celebrations? Where do they take place?
9. What activities do you and your family do together? (E.g., play sports, go for walks, play games, etc.)
10. Does your family have traditions? How do they honour them?
11. Does your family help others? Describe who they help and how they help them. Are there any other ways that you think your family can help others?
12. How do the members of your family show love for one another? Name 2 or 3 ways.

### **Families Love Each Other Ebook Activity Ideas**

1. Bring in a picture of your family to make a class mural
2. Bring in magazines (or use magazines in the classroom) to make a collage of favourite foods

### **Families Love Each Other Drawing activities:**

#### **Grades 1-3**

1. Draw your family having dinner. Include as much detail as possible including the family members who are there and where they sit.
2. Draw your favourite meal and label it. (Can also separate into categories like: appetizer, main course, dessert)
3. Draw your favourite celebration with your family. Be sure to draw every family member who is there.
4. Draw what you do to get ready for bed every night. Draw it in steps (Step 1, Step 2, etc.)

## **Families Love Each Other Writing Activities**

### **Grades 4-8**

1. Write a paragraph to explain the best meal you've ever had. What foods did you eat? What made it the best meal? (E.g., the food, the company, the occasion, etc.). Be sure to include 4-6 sentences.
2. In point form, write a list of all the food you would need in order for your family to have meals for a week. Divide your list into the following categories: Fruit, Vegetables, Dairy Products, Meat and Alternatives, Cereal and Grains, Dessert.  
Alternative activity: This can be done as a collage as well, by cutting out images from grocery flyers.
3. Describe in a paragraph a tradition that your family observes. Explain how they honour this tradition with the things they say or do.

## **Video Discussion Questions**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/udxa515qayivmfl/Bridging%20Gaps%20v2.mp4?dl=0>

- What did you see/ hear in the video that resonated with you?
- What are some barriers that language, culture and faith represent for people who identify as LGBTQ+
- What are some benefits that language, culture and faith provide for people who identify as LGBTQ+
- In what ways can faith and culture help one connect to the LGBTQ+ community?
- In what ways can faith and culture be a barrier to connecting with the LGBTQ+ community?
- What new ideas and perspectives did Ally's experience give you?
- What new ideas and perspectives did AJ and their mom's experience give you?
- In your own words, elaborate on AJ's mom's statement, "I love you, not your gender"

- **How can we build more inclusive communities where people feel safe to be themselves?**

## **Youth TIPS Sheets Activity Ideas (Intermediate/ Senior)**

# HOW TO TALK TO YOUR FAMILY ABOUT SEXUAL AND GENDER IDENTITIES

- Think about your emotional and physical safety first.
- Find people who support you to talk to as well.
- Stay calm.
- Don't try to convince anyone.
- Explain that being different is a positive thing in life.
- Have shorter/smaller conversations.
- Show your family that you respect their/your culture/faith.
- Focus on safety, bullying prevention, and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Listen more than you talk.
- Don't give up!



The Ontario Human Rights Code protects people of different genders and sexual orientations from discrimination and harassment.

## Resources

- |                                                                    |                                                                              |                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ▶ <b>Kids Help Phone</b><br>www.kidshelpphone.ca<br>1-800-668-6868 | ▶ <b>LGBT Youth Line</b><br>www.youthline.ca<br>1-800-268-9688               | ▶ <b>Distress and Crisis Ontario</b><br>www.dcontario.org/centres.html<br>1-800-567-9699 |
| ▶ <b>Trans Lifeline</b><br>www.translifeline.org<br>1-877-330-6366 | ▶ <b>PFLAG Canada — Peel Chapter</b><br>www.pflagcanada.ca<br>1-888-530-6777 | ▶ <b>Rainbow Health Ontario</b><br>www.rainbowhealthontario.ca<br>416-324-4262           |

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- Breathing activity (to help all participants stay calm during difficult situations)
  - Using I Feel statements (to help bridge the communication gap)
    - When you \_\_\_ I feel \_\_\_ because \_\_\_

- Talk about different feeling words if the participants are unfamiliar or uncomfortable
- Role playing discussions
  - See <https://lgbtrc.usc.edu/education/activities/> for some script ideas.
  - I'm happy to come up with my own role playing scripts for the pamphlet if we like this idea

b) LGBTQ+ definitions page (could be made into a matching activity)

c) Positive Space Contract

- Everyone in the group has a sticky note and on it they write down 10 things in the order of importance that they need to feel comfortable and welcome in a space
- Everyone shares their things and looks for commonalities or things that they missed
- Together the group writes a list of 10 things that they want to commit to doing as a group to create a welcoming space for everyone.
- Everyone signs the piece of paper and it gets posted

d) Positive Space Contract Part 2

- Building off the previous exercise, have participants consider how safe they would feel as a trans person in the following situations. Discuss why they would feel that way. What are ways that we can help improve spaces to make them safer and more positive? How would the answers to these situations change if you were a trans person of colour or of a different cultural or religious background?
  - • At school
  - • At the gym
  - • At a movie theater with their partner
  - • Walking down the street
  - • At a Pride parade
  - • At the pool
  - • In a classroom
  - • At a birthday party
  - • At a restaurant
  - • At a family event
  - • Hanging out with friends
  - • At work
  - • As a new student at school
  - • Visiting their physician

f) Imagine This

- Similar activity found on <https://lgbtrc.usc.edu/education/activities/>
- A group imagination scenario where each person imagines that they have found their perfect soul mate. The catch is that they cannot use gendered pronouns to describe them or indicate their sex. They also cannot tell anyone that they are in love with this person even though they make them feel so special.
- Discuss what that person is like to you (without gendered pronouns)

- And how you would feel if you couldn't tell anyone about your special person
- How would you feel if your friends started pressuring to go out on a date with someone else when you had already found your person?

g) Rites of Passage

- Activity found at <https://lgbtrc.usc.edu/education/activities/>
- With the group post 3 sheets of chart paper on a wall titled 'childhood, adolescence, and adulthood'
- With sticky notes, each person contributes events that are rites of passage in each stage of life (losing teeth, first significant other, graduating getting married, having kids etc.)
- Then re-examine the list one item at a time and consider how these rites of passage may/may not be different for members of the lgbtq+ community.
- Post a different coloured sticky note beside the rites that have differences and the same colour next to the ones that are similar

h) Sentence Starters

- Sentence starters taken from <https://lgbtrc.usc.edu/education/activities/>
- Provide each participant with a piece of paper with the sentences outlined and give them time to fill in their answers.
- Welcome sharing but don't force it. This is meant to be an individual self-exploration exercise

**FIRST SENTENCE:** As a parent, if I found out my child were taught by a transgender teacher, I would...

**SECOND SENTENCE:** If a close friend of mine who I assumed was male started wearing makeup, I would feel...

**THIRD SENTENCE:** When I think of two people of the same sex kissing each other I feel...

**FOURTH SENTENCE:** As a parent, if my child chose to change their name, I would...

**FIFTH SENTENCE:** If someone of my own sex made a sexual advance to me, I would...

**SIXTH SENTENCE:** If I were attending a weekend conference and I found out my roommate was gay or lesbian, I would...

**SEVENTH SENTENCE:** When I think about children who are being raised by lesbian or gay couples, I feel...

**EIGHTH SENTENCE:** What I admire about the LGBTQ+ community is...

**NINTH SENTENCE:** When I see Transgender people I feel.....

**TENTH SENTENCE:** As a person of faith, if I found learned a member of my religious community was part of the LGBTQ+ community, I would...

i) Activity Exploring Loss

- Activity found at <https://lgbtrc.usc.edu/education/activities/>
- Each person gets 16 slips of paper - 4 different colours, 4 slips in each colour
- On 4 slips write different people that you love

- On 4 slips write different things that you enjoy
- On 4 slips write different ideas that you value/motivate you
- On 4 slips write different places that you never want to forget
- #1 The facilitator asks the group members to look at their papers and pick one thing to throw away - these are the predictable losses
- #2 Then turn the categories over but the slips still facing up and the members randomly take one slip from each category (total of 4 slips) and throw them away - these are the random losses that occur because of our choices
- #3 Then turn the categories and the slips over and randomly take 4 slips from each category (total of 4 slips) - these are the random and unpredictable losses that many LGBTQ+ people face
  - Discuss afterwards what kinds of losses LGBTQ+ people might face in each category (people, things, ideas, places) and why they might face these losses

#### i) Life in a Box

- Goal of the activity is to explore different gray areas in our lives for the purpose of discovering that life is not black and white, and neither is gender
- 1. Start by searching the room and finding three different 'white' items and placing them next to each other. Then find 3 'black' items and place them next to each other - Discuss observations
- 2. Choose 1 option from the following
  - a) Girls should wear pants b)Both c)Girls should not wear pants
  - a)Boys should wear dresses b)Both c)Boys should not wear dresses
  - a)Boys are emotional b)Both c)Boys are not emotional
  - a)Girls are emotional b)Both c) Girls are not emotional
  - a)Boys love sports b)Both c)Boys hate sports
  - a)Girls love sports b)Both c)Boys hate sports
  - a)Girls should wear makeup b)Both c)Girls should not wear makeup
  - a)Boys should wear makeup b)Both c)Boys should not wear makeup
  - a)Boys need to be strong b)Both c) Boys are weak
  - a)Girls need to be strong b)Both c)Girls are weak
  - a)Boys are large b)Both c) Boys are small
  - a)Girls are large b)Both c) Girls are small
  - a)Boys are loud b)Both c)Boys are quiet
  - a)Girls are loud b)Both c)Girls are quiet
  - a)Boys are aggressive b)Both c)Boys are submissive
  - a)Girls are aggressive b)Both c)Girls are submissive
  - a)Boys are nurses b)Both c)Boys are doctors
  - a)Girls are nurses b)Both c)Girls are doctors
- 3. Count up the total of all a) b) and c) answers and discuss the results
- 4. Finish by reviewing the genderbread person and exploring continuums of gender

## Resources

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