



Working with LGBTQ+ Students

If you're planning to work in any school or education environment, you can be sure that you will work with and meet LGBTQ+ students and learners. Here are a few quick things to keep in mind to ensure that you are being as inclusive and supportive as possible.

1. LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer. The + sign indicates "and more..." which recognizes the diversity of the community and makes sure that nobody is left out.
2. An "ally" is someone who is not LGBTQ+ but supports the LGBTQ+ community.
3. LGBTQ+ people can be any age, race, culture, religion, nationality, size, ability, class, etc. This means that it's important that you don't make any assumptions about who is or isn't LGBTQ+.
4. Nobody is too young or too old to know if they are LGBTQ+ or not.
5. If an LGBTQ+ student doesn't feel as though their teachers or educators support and respect their identities, it makes it harder for them to learn and feel safe at school.
6. It is very dangerous to disclose somebody's LGBTQ+ identity without their permission. This includes telling a parent or guardian that their child is LGBTQ+.
7. Telling an LGBTQ+ student that their identity or LGBTQ+ relationships are wrong or immoral is harmful and can lead to students not feeling safe to learn.



Working with Transgender Students

If you're planning to work in any school or education environment, you can be sure that you will work with and meet transgender students and learners. Here are a few quick things to keep in mind to ensure that you are being as inclusive and supportive as possible.

1. A transgender person is somebody who identifies as a gender different than the one they were assigned at birth. In simple terms, trans boy is a boy who was assigned "girl" when they were born, and a trans girl is a girl who was assigned "boy" when they were born. Some transgender people may not identify with "boy" or "girl" and may identify as "non-binary" or "gender fluid".
2. Try using gender neutral language like: students, folks, children, teens, instead of phrases like "girls and boys". Gendered language can cause some students to feel like they aren't included.
3. It is important to respect a person's chosen name and pronouns, even if they don't make sense to us. If a student asks you to call them by a different name, make sure you do so. If a student asks you to use different pronouns, including "they/them", make sure you do so. When we refer to a transgender person with the wrong gender (either through names, pronouns, or other words), that is called "misgendering".
4. Understand that even if you misgender a student by accident, that this impacts their learning. Studies have shown that transgender children often miss school because of a fear of misgendering or not being respected as the gender they identify as.
5. Transgender students should have the right to use whichever washroom they feel most comfortable with. When trans people are forced to use a different washroom, this can lead to physiological distress often referred to as "gender dysphoria".
6. Be careful not to separate or divide students by gender or sex in a classroom or learning environment. This can sometimes lead to teachers making assumptions about what "gender category" a child fits into, or can cause a child who's unsure themselves to feel anxious or frustrated. This impacts children's learning.