





# Stand Up! 2015

## Welcome!

We are delighted you'd like to make your school a welcoming and safe place for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender students. Stand Up Awareness Week tackles homophobic and transphobic bullying by encouraging friendship between LGBT students and other students. After getting feedback from teachers and principals, we've moved Stand Up Week to a new time in the school year – in November. You told us that this new timing would make it easier for schools to hold events for Stand Up week.

We have just had a 50% increase in the Stand Up mailing list! We'd like to send a very special welcome to all the schools who are participating in Stand Up for the first time! And it's wonderful to have the support of all the education partners whose logos are on the back page of this booklet. We know that real change takes time and we're looking forward to working together over the long haul.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. *Ní neart go cur le chéile!*

You are welcome to use the Stand Up pack in the ways that are most suitable for your school or youth service.

- **See the section 'What You Can Do for Stand Up Week'.**
- **See section on 'Why Stand Up is Needed.'**
- **We have updated our material about transgender students: see under 'LGBT Words', 'Why Stand Up is Needed,' and 'Ideas from Trans Students.'**
- **We welcome any questions or feedback you may have on Stand Up!**

Thank you,

**Carol-Anne O'Brien,**

Director of Advocacy

BeLonG To Youth Services,

**info@belongto.org**

**www.belongto.org**

P.S. The Stand Up! pack will also be available on our website in PDF format.

# **Stand Up!**

## **What You Can Do For Stand Up Week**

### **Great ideas for Stand Up! - from teachers and youth workers**

1. Participate in Stand Up training (delivered by BeLonG To staff.)  
See [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org) for details.
2. Put Stand Up! posters on prominent notice boards in your school – to help create a welcoming school environment. Keep the posters displayed all year.
3. Ask students their ideas for making their school more inclusive and how they would Stand Up! Take their ideas and make a collage (see photo on the right for how a school in Meath made a collage like this.)
4. Show some of our videos (see BeLonG To's YouTube channel or [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org), and our online DVD Discussion Guide.
5. Do a Stand Up! activity in your class. See more ideas on our website [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org).
6. Hold a Chalk it Up! event: invite students to use coloured chalk to write and draw on the pavement for Stand Up! Week. They can write positive messages about LGBT young people and friendship.
7. Look at the Ideas from Transgender students on Page 10 and discuss with students how you could implement at least one in your school.
8. Send us photos of your Stand Up activities! [info@belongto.org](mailto:info@belongto.org).

Top Right.  
Jan O'Sullivan TD, Minister for Education & Skills  
Bottom Right.  
Stand Up, April 2015 - Dublin School

**"I encourage all schools to fully participate in Stand Up! Week."**

**Jan O'Sullivan TD, Minister for Education & Skills**



# Stand Up!

## Learning Activity: LGBT Words

**Aim:** To give young people definitions and respectful words for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

**Materials Needed:** Pens, paper, list of LGBT Words Updated

**Time needed:** 20 - 30 minutes.

### **What to do:**

- Introduce the topic by saying that, unfortunately, we all hear negative words about gay and transgender people – often we only hear the negative words and they're used to put people down.
- Break the young people into pairs, give them one or two of the LGBT words, and ask them to come up with what they think is a good definition.
- After 15 minutes bring the groups back together and discuss what the participants think the words mean, comparing that with the definitions on the list below.

### **LGBT Words - Updated\***

**Allies:** People who work for equality, especially if they are not a member of a group facing inequality.

**Bisexual:** Someone who is attracted to women and men.

**Biphobia:** Prejudice or discrimination towards bisexual people.

**Coming out:** Understanding oneself and telling others about being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

**Cisgender:** Someone who is not transgender.

**Gay:** Someone who is primarily to people of the same gender. In the past, the term 'homosexual' was used. Gay usually refers to males as many women prefer to call themselves lesbian.

**Gender identity:** A person's deeply felt internal identity as female, male, or some other gender.

**Gender expression:** How people show their gender, through their dress, hair, voice, mannerisms, etc.

**Heterosexual/straight:** Someone who is attracted to people of another gender.

**Homophobic bullying:** Bullying based on prejudice or discrimination towards LGBT people. Bullying of people who are LGBT, or who are seen to be LGBT.

**Lesbian:** A woman who is primarily attracted to other women.

**LGBT:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans people.



Stand Up, April 2015 - Student Support

**Sexual Orientation:** The attraction people feel towards others based on their gender.

**Transgender, or Trans:** An umbrella term for those whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were given at birth.

**Transition:** A process in which some trans people begin to live as the gender with which they identify, rather than the sex they were given at birth. Transition may or may not include social, physical, medical or legal changes, e.g. coming out to family and friends, changing one's appearance and/or name, pronoun, and legal documents, and medical treatment (e.g. hormones or surgery.)

**Gender Fluid:** Is a non-binary gender identity. Gender fluid individuals experience different gender identities at different times. A gender fluid person's gender identity can be multiple genders at once, then switch to none at all, or move between single gender identities. Some gender fluid people regularly move between only a few specific genders, perhaps as few as two.

**Gender Non-binary:** An umbrella term for gender identities that is not necessarily male, female or viewed in a binary manner.. This includes individuals whose gender identity is neither exclusively male nor female, a combination of male and female or between or beyond genders. Similar to the usage of transgender, people under the non-binary umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms.

**Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on prejudice or discrimination towards transgender people. Bullying of people who are trans, or who are seen to be trans.

\*Publications from Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) were helpful in updating this list, [www.teni.ie](http://www.teni.ie)

# Stand Up!

## Why Do We Need Stand Up?

### 1. High Rates of Homophobic & Transphobic Bullying in Irish Schools

In 2013, the Department of Education's *Action Plan on Bullying* stated that the 'average percentage' of children in Ireland who report being bullied is 27.3% (p.17). The Action Plan noted that 'research by the Children's Research Centre (Mayock et al) found that 50% of LGBT people had experienced bullying in schools.' (p.23)

### 2. Homophobic Bullying Affects Mental Health

The Department of Education Action Plan on Bullying quotes the finding of the Children's Research Centre that there is a '*clear correlation between homophobic and transphobic bullying and serious mental health difficulties among LGBT people to the extent that:*

- **27% had self-harmed.**
- **Over 50% of under-25s had seriously thought of ending their lives.**
- **Almost 20% of under-25s had attempted suicide (p.35.)'**

Teachers at Stand Up Training, Donegal, March 2015



### **3. To Protect More Vulnerable Students**

The Department of Education's Anti-Bullying Procedures (2013) says that certain students are more vulnerable to bullying. 'These include lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) pupils and those perceived to be LGBT.'(4.3.) The Department requires that schools prevent bullying by encouraging positive and inclusive school climates, including participating in LGBT awareness events.

### **4. Department of Education working to meet the Needs of Trans Students**

In October 2015, the DES held an historic Round Table on the issues facing Transgender students in Irish schools. This followed the passing of Gender Recognition Act by the Oireachtas in July 2015. The Gender Recognition Act provides for the legal recognition of the preferred gender of people who are over 18. It also allows access to gender recognition to 16 and 17 year-olds who have the support of their parents and medical practitioners. The round table aimed to begin discussing the implications of these legal developments for schools. Participants included teacher unions, management bodies and representatives of school leaders, parents and students. BeLonG To was honoured to be invited to speak at the round table, and a staff member and a trans student made a joint presentation. They noted that trans students have had both positive and negative experiences in school. Some schools have been very understanding and have gone out of their way to meet the needs of trans students. Unfortunately, some other schools have not respected the preferred names and pronouns of trans students, or they have not been flexible in terms of which uniforms they can wear. Access to appropriate toilet facilities and change rooms were noted as being particularly significant in terms of the health and dignity of trans students. When trans students face barriers in these areas, they can have a hugely negative impact. See 'Ideas from Trans students' on the next page.

### **5. Stand Up Awareness Week is recommended by Department of Education and by Teachers across Ireland**

The Department of Education's Action Plan on Bullying recommended that the Department support Stand Up! In addition, the independent evaluation of Stand Up in 2014 said that teachers found Stand Up Week to be an excellent national campaign that 'builds awareness of homophobic and transphobic bullying among students and staff.'

# Stand Up!

## Ideas From Transgender Students

Trans young people are in schools across Ireland. Thank you to the members of IndividualiTY (BeLoNG To's trans youth group) for helping us update these ideas for how schools can be safe and inclusive.

1. Please develop school policies for including trans students.
2. We feel more respected and included if staff use the name and pronoun we choose.
3. Please be flexible about which uniforms we can wear (skirts or trousers) and hair length, jewellery, etc.
4. Ask us what we need for toilets and change rooms – it's great to have a choice between male, female and gender neutral options.  
(please avoid using disability toilets as an option)
5. Please be flexible about gender inclusion in school sports.
6. Engage students in learning about trans issues
7. It's very important to respect our confidentiality about being Trans.
8. If we ask for it, please support us in talking to our parents.
9. We really benefit when staff get training on Trans and LGB issues, especially school counsellors.
10. Please teach the Trans section of the SPHE resource, *Growing Up LGBT*.
11. Teachers need to challenge transphobic bullying
12. Please don't ask about or comment negatively on body changes.
13. Please fully implement your school's Anti-Bullying Policy (LGB students would also very much agree with this point.)

**For information  
about BeLoNG To's  
LGBT youth groups  
in Dublin & around  
Ireland, please  
see our website  
[www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org)**

Top Right.  
Teachers in Dublin School Dress in Rainbow Colours  
Bottom Right.  
Stand Up April 2015, Student Messages in Dublin School



# Stand Up! Awareness Week Against Homophobic & Transphobic Bullying 23 – 27 November / Samhain 2015

BeLonG To is grateful for the support of:



BeLonG To is honoured that Stand Up Week is endorsed by all of the following education partners:



We're delighted that Stand Up 2015 is endorsed by these community & youth sector partners:



**belong<sup>TO</sup>**

BeLonG To is Ireland's national organisation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people. BeLonG To has developed a network of youth groups in Dublin and around Ireland which provide vital support for LGBT young people. BeLonG To also works with government and other partners to combat homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools and communities.

**We would love to hear from you!**

Tell us what your school or youth service did for Stand Up! Awareness Week.

Carol-Anne O'Brien, Director of Advocacy

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