HCPSS

LGBTQIA+ Elementary Toolkit

GSA/SAGA Clubs and Affinity Groups

Developed by LGBTQIA+ Advisory Group

August 2022

Last Updated 8.8.2022

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Introduction

Welcome! Thank you for taking this first important step in improving the lives of our **LGBTQIA+** (*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, two-spirit, nonbinary, intersex, asexual, as well as those whose identities do not fall within cisgender or heteronormative contraints or preconceptions*) students, staff, and families. This toolkit is designed to provide you with a foundation as you begin (or continue) LGBTQIA+ advocacy work at your elementary school. This toolkit is a companion document to the HCPSS document Affirming and Supporting LGBTQIA+ Students and Staff – Creating a Gender Inclusive Environment in Schools.This toolkit includes a variety of resources that will help guide you as you support elementary aged LGBTQIA+ students and their families. Basic information, terminology, book suggestions, lesson plan options, frequently asked questions (FAQ's), dates, appropriate language, ways to engage (or start) your Affinity groups, how to be an ally, and dates of importance are all included in this toolkit that you can use as a reference throughout the school year.

What is **LGBTQIA+**? It is an acronym that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, asexual and other people use to describe aspects of their identity and signal community membership.

Why is it important for students to have access to GSA's (*Gender and Sexuality Alliance*) **and Affinity groups** (*a group of people linked by their common interests*)**?**

While schools strive to be safe spaces for all students, this isn't always the case, nor is it the perception of our most vulnerable students. In order to break barriers, stereotypes, and perceptions, it is essential to bring not only visibility, but also connectivity and security to students and their families who do not fit within traditional gender and sexuality norms. GSA's and Affinity groups provide a safe space for students to exist and come as they wish to be seen and receive support without judgment or generalization about their appearance, orientation, or identity. These groups can provide safe haven, identify trusted adults in the building, and give students a space to share their experiences with each other and a trusted adult or adults. As with most young folx, LGBTQIA+ students are learning about and exploring their own identities and coming to terms with how they fit in their home, school, and work communities. Students should see themselves represented in their communities. Having a GSA or Affinity group that provides representation, visibility, and advocacy can change a school culture to make LGBTQIA+ students and families feel welcome and supported.

Affirming Adults

According to research conducted by The Trevor Project, LGBTQIA+ youth who reported having at least *one* affirming and accepting adult were 40% *less* likely to have a suicide attempt. Having

📖 Back to Table of Contents

an affirming adult who is visible and accessible to LGBTQIA+ students can save lives (The Trevor Project 1).

Ways to be Affirming

- Ask students to share their pronouns (if comfortable) and chosen name and offer up yours.
    - Take note of the pronouns students use and actually use them.
    - Before talking to other students, educators, and parents, check with students about using their pronouns and chosen name.
- Actively reflect on ***your*** behavior and attitude.
    - How did I welcome my class today? Did I correct students who used incorrect pronouns or a name for another student? Did I correct myself and am I open to being corrected?
- Allow students to direct their own timeline.
    - It is imperative to be inclusive of allies in GSA and Affinity group activities not only for the support, but also many students may present as an ally instead of coming out.
    - Give students the opportunity to make a choice when disclosing their chosen name and pronouns.
    - A student may choose to come out to some, but not all. NEVER disclose personal information a student has shared with you to other students or even other educators.
    - Always ask permission before referring to students by their chosen name and pronouns to other students, educators, parents, or in other spaces outside of the classroom or GSA/Affinity group.
- Always accept how students tell you they identify (if they choose to share with you).
- Call out bullying and slurs ***every*** time you see/hear it.
- Display your allyship and rainbows proudly.
    - The rainbow flag is a very clear representation of the queer community, and by displaying it in your office, classroom, and safe spaces, students will know that you are an ally and an affirming adult.

The needs of LGBTQIA+ students and their communities are ever changing. As needs change, this Toolkit will be updated and expanded to address and meet the needs of our students. Thank you for taking the time to read this tool kit and put these suggestions into practice. If you have questions, concerns, suggestions, or updates, please contact us at pride@hcpss.org.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Works Consulted

Kar, Debayani, and Juniperangelica Cordova. *GSA Advisor Handbook*. 2nd ed., 2020. *GSA Network*, gsanetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Advisor-Handbook-2020.pdf. Accessed 18 June 2022.

Koehler, Elizabeth M. *LGBTQ-Themed Literature in School Libraries: Counteracting the Homophobia Epidemic*. 2011. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, MS thesis. *Carolina Digital Repository*, cdr.lib.unc.edu/concern/file_sets/wp988p77f?locale=en. Accessed 18 June 2022.

Poirier, J. M., et al. *A Guide for Understanding, Supporting, and Affirming LGBTQI2-S Children, Youth, and Families.* 2104. *American Institutes for Research*, www.air.org/sites/default/files/A_Guide_for_Understanding_Supporting_and_Affirming_LGBTQI2-S_Children_Youth_and_Families.pdf. Accessed 18 June 2022.

Safe Space Kit: Guide to Being an Ally to LGBT Students. Washington, GLSEN Publishers, 2016. *https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/GLSEN%20Safe%20Space%20Kit.pdf*. Accessed 18 June 2022.

The Trevor Project Research Brief: Accepting Adults Reduce Suicide Attempts among LGBTQ Youth. June 2019. *The Trevor Project*, www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Trevor-Project-Accepting-Adult-Research-Brief_June-2019.pdf. Accessed 18 June 2022.

"What Is a GSA Club?" *GSA Network*, 2022, gsanetwork.org/what-is-a-gsa/. Accessed 18 June 2022.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Introduction

Setting the Context - Why Elementary?

Affinity Groups

Elementary Terms and Language

Using Pronouns

Elementary Resources

School Rainbow Representatives

Feeder School Chart

Dates of Importance

General Resources

HCPSS Partnerships

Charitable Organizations (for activism)

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Setting the Context - Why Elementary?

Students learn as they grow. The most foundational and important things that students learn are through home, and through school. At home, children learn family dynamics and norms about their family. At school, children will learn and grow with other children who will have both similar and different experiences and interests. In HCPSS, we believe it's important for children to recognize that there are many different types of families and to be respectful of all students, their families, culture, and experiences. The more children can learn to appreciate, respect and learn about and from each other, the more likely they will be successful during their formative years as well as continue on to become empathetic adults who work well with others (Ho).

It is also important that children not feel othered or ostracized at school. Creating a welcoming and accepting environment for all of our students from an early age ensures that students will not only enjoy coming to school, but will also feel comfortable being themselves no matter their individual identity or family dynamics.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Affinity Groups

Affinity Groups are a way for LGBTQIA+ students and families to feel affirmed and welcome. This can be used as a time to get to know each other, have fun, and also to share resources from teacher to parent, parent to parent, parent to teacher, and among students. Students may also just wish to have a more rainbow-centered community with whom they can grow.

Advertising your Affinity Group

After School/Evening Affinity Groups

When publishing information about your school's Affinity Group, begin with reaching out to your school counselor. They may know more about the community and be able to reach out to specific students and families who might have more of an interest in participating. Then, ask your principal and principal secretary to help advertise your group through the school newsletter, Canvas announcements, the school calendar, and website. The group should be open to all allies of LGBTQIA+ students, staff, and families. Please note, that if the group meets before or after school, it will require parent permission to attend. This may exclude certain students due to transportation and/or issues of safety and acceptance. If the group meets in the evening, parents would attend the group with their child(ren).

During School Rainbow Club

Schools may choose to hold optional clubs during the school day, which could occur during lunch, recess, or morning SEL time for example. In this case, the Rainbow Club Sponsor could advertise the club through morning announcements, posters, and word of mouth. Holding club meetings during the school day makes the group more accessible to students who may have barriers to attend. Please note if students will miss recess regularly for any club, parents must be notified. Please see HCPSS Policy 9090 - Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Activity.

We have provided suggested language that can be used when sharing information about the purpose of the Affinity Group/Rainbow Club. Please copy and paste the wording listed below and use as needed.

Sample Newsletter Announcement

Greetings, all! We are excited to share that we will be holding an LGBTQIA+ Affinity group open to all students to attend. During our group meetings, students will have the opportunity to meet with other LGBTQIA+ students and allies in this supportive group that

provides students with the opportunity to: learn more about the LGBTQIA+ community, use art as a means of self-expression, discuss topics of student-directed interest, and be part of a community.

Ideas for Supporting Staff

Some staff members could be unsure of the purpose of the club or why students are joining. Here are some possible ideas for structuring those conversations:

Say, “At this school, we strive to create a community of caring and belonging. Club activities will focus on ways to create a safer, more inclusive school environment.”

“This club focuses on diversity and representation for all students.”

“Students can learn skills to become allies for all their classmates.”

“This club is open to all students, regardless of their identity.”

“The purpose of this club is to help teach students the importance of advocacy skills, both for themselves and for others.”

Affinity Group Guidelines

It is important to establish guidelines and norms with your group/club members. Begin with introductions and allow students to share what they wish to get out of the group/club meetings. As a group, create a list of expectations for the meetings including confidentiality and its limitations. At the start of each meeting, remind participants of the expectations they helped create to ensure a safe and welcoming space.

Things to consider prior to starting your affinity group:

Meeting dates and times

Permission to hold/attend meetings

Confidentiality

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Affinity Group Activities

Getting to Know You

Students joining the group/club may not be in the same class or grade level. After establishing group expectations, have students participate in a getting to know you activity. Students may suggest an activity. Or, try one of these.

Snowball Fight

Beach Ball Toss

Our Names Book

Read Alouds

Have a look at the Suggested Rainbow Book List - Elementary for titles approved for media center purchase. Please note that not all titles will serve as good read-alouds, but would make for good individual or lapsit stories at home. Preview the books ahead of time prior to a group read-aloud.

Keep it Fun/Safe

Affinity Groups' primary focus should be on creating a safe, fun, nurturing environment where students feel comfortable being themselves. While Rainbow Reps might feel comfortable holding some conversations with students, students may sometimes share things that are better discussed with a member of the student services team. In those instances, Rainbow Reps can help the student by offering to connect them with resources within the school.

Self-Expression Through Arts and Crafts

Tie-dying, making bracelets, painting, creating students' own safe space posters to display throughout the school.

Approaching Activism (activism is taught in Social Studies - pair with this lesson to reinforce)

Discussions around how your school can create after-school events and activities that celebrate all families.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Sample Meeting Schedule

1 -2 sessions a month, no more than 1 session a week.

Meeting Template

Sample 20 Minute Meeting

- 5 minute check-in and student talk
- 10 minute action/activity (predetermined)
- 5 minute reflection/mini-community circle

Other Considerations

Move Up Day - Consider reaching out to your feeder middle school so 5th grade students are familiar with the GSA/Affinity group at the middle school they will be attending.

LGBTQIA+ Families - For new LGBTQIA+ families, let them know about the CARY organization as well as PFLAG Howard County for additional support and resources.

Ludovic Bertron from New York City, Usa, CC BY 2.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Elementary Terms and Language

Utilizing and teaching sensitive vocabulary requires a level of comfort from the educator, and a level of trust from the students. It is crucial that these terms are placed into a context that allows students to utilize them appropriately and respectfully.

In the event that a word, term, topic, or question is raised that is uncomfortable, inappropriate, or uncertain, use the below guidelines. If you have a question, you can always reach out to the Rainbow Representative at your school or send an email to pride@hcpss.org.

If you want to say, "I can't answer that!" Instead, consider the following...

In the event that terms are brought up that are not appropriate for the setting, it is important that educators not dismiss the student completely. All questions should be addressed. If a question cannot be answered because it is inappropriate for the setting, direct students to a source who could answer the question. For example, an educator could say, "What a great question! That's not something that we can talk about in school; but, let's review who we can go to with those kinds of questions. You can ask a trusted adult at home or a healthcare provider for more information, or you can use a reputable website like kidshealth.org to find information about that."

If you want to say, "I don't know that!" Instead, consider the following...

Students may use or ask about terms that are not known to the educator. Allow time for processing and resource-gathering when necessary. Do not feel pressured to "know everything" or to be able to immediately explain everything at a developmentally-appropriate level. It is preferable to explain to the student that you need some time to process and research about the topic than to provide a response that could be incorrect or harmful. For example, an educator could say, "Wow! What a great point! I hadn't thought about that before. I want to make sure that I have the best possible answer for that, so I'm going to ask you to hold onto that for now and know that I will come back to it in the future. In the event that you cannot wait to hear about this from me, you can ask a trusted adult at home or a healthcare provider for more information, or you can use a reputable website like KidsHealth to find information about that." If an educator needs advice on how to answer something in developmentally-appropriate or setting-appropriate language, they can reach out to the Rainbow Representative at their school or email pride@hcpss.org.

It is also important to avoid use of slang terms as much as possible to ensure clarity of communication and appropriate use of language. If a student uses a slang term that is unfamiliar,

it can be helpful to have the student explain what they mean in another way. This should be done respectfully, such as by saying, “I’m not sure that the word/term you used means the same thing to everyone in this space. To make sure that we’re all on the same page, could you clarify what that word means? Could you explain that to us using different or other words so that we can all understand?”

If you want to say, “That’s not what that means!” Instead, consider the following...

Language is constantly evolving; this is especially true of language that relates to identity. As such, a definition or term may become rapidly outdated or confusing based on prevailing cultural norms. In the event that a term or definition is uncomfortable for or inapplicable to a student, the individual’s identity should be respected. A person should never be told that the way they define their identity or self is incorrect. In the event that a term or definition is no longer appropriate or accurate, please email Pride@hcpss.org. If students disagree about a term, an educator could say, “Isn’t it amazing how words can mean different things to different people? Because this can lead to confusion and potentially harming a relationship with someone, we will allow people to define their own identities as they see fit. We can discuss this further as long as the discussion is respectful.”

If you want to say, “I don’t believe in that or agree with that!” Instead, consider the following...

Families, cultures, and environments vary in their level of support and inclusion. As a community, the overarching goal is always to celebrate diversity and foster an inclusive environment for all. A person should never be told that the way they feel or what they believe is incorrect. If there is disagreement, an educator could say, “When we talk about being an ally and respecting others, we are talking about ensuring that every person feels safe and welcome in our lives and ensuring that we are providing a non-judgmental space for everyone. This includes all kinds of differences, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, family, ability, religion, culture... every kind of difference. All of these differences should be celebrated and welcomed, and we should make sure that we are all being respectful of others' identities.”

If you want to say, “I don’t get it.” Instad, consider the following...

Vocabulary learning builds upon a person’s prior knowledge and understanding. As such, it may be necessary to use a lower-level definition of a term if there is confusion about the grade-band definition. For example, if a student does not understand a high school definition of a term that is also defined at the middle or elementary level, an educator should use a lower-level definition to facilitate understanding. A student can also be referred to another source of valid and reliable

📖 Back to Table of Contents

information, such as a trusted adult at home or a healthcare provider for more information, or a reputable website like kidshealth.org.

LGBTQIA+ Elementary Definitions

Term	Definition
bisexual	People who love or are attracted to people of more than one gender
body dysmorphia	When a person feels so sad or angry because of the way their body looks that they have a hard time learning, playing, or doing other activities. The things that make them sad or angry may not be visible to other people.
bullying	An action done that is purposeful, continual, and creates an imbalance of power
cisgender	When someone's sex assigned at birth is the same as what they know their gender to be
coming out	The process of privately or publicly accepting or telling people about a person's own sexual orientation or gender identity
conform	To fit in with a group or a group's expectations
gay/ homosexual	People who love or are attracted to people of the same gender as their own
gender/ gender identity	Whether a person is a boy, girl, both, neither, or something totally different. Gender comes from inside a person - it is how they feel inside their brain and their heart. Everyone has a gender identity.
gender expansive/ gender independent/ gender creative/ gender diverse	People who celebrate that there are many ways to be the gender that they are (girl, boy, both, or neither)
gender dysphoria	When someone feels angry or sad because their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity aren't the same
gender expression	How a person shows their gender to the world through things like hair, clothes, movement, and talking
gender non-conforming/ nonbinary/ gender fluid	Someone who doesn't feel like the words "girl" or "boy" describe who they are. Their gender might fit into both or neither. *Note that nonbinary may be abbreviated as enby. NB/nb usually refers to Non-Black.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

gender role/ gender stereotype	How a person is expected to dress, talk, and behave based on their gender
harassment	Making someone feel bad or uncomfortable and continuing even after they have been asked to stop
hormones	Special chemicals that help the body to do certain things such as growing, sleeping, and digesting food. Most hormones are made inside the body.
identity	The qualities, characteristics, or beliefs that make a person who they are. The sense a person has of themself, who they are, and what they think is important. Identities may shift, change, and grow throughout someone's life.
lesbian	People who love or are attracted to people of the same gender; usually two women
LGBTQIA+	Acronym (letters that stand for the words) for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people plus community members who use different language to describe identity
pansexual	People who love or are attracted to people of any gender
pronouns	Words used to refer to someone when not using their name. Some examples include they, she, he, their, her, his, them, and him, but these are not the only examples.
queer	A word used to identify with and celebrate people of all gender identities and all the ways people love each other. When used in a mean way, it is a word that hurts.
sex	Labels of "boy" or "girl" that are based on how someone's private parts look and how their body is shaped
sex assigned at birth	The sex someone is given when they are born based on what their private parts look like
sexual orientation	Who a person loves or is attracted to
stereotype	A too simple and/or unfair belief or idea that groups of people have particular characteristics or that all people in a group are the same
straight/ heterosexual	People who love or are attracted to people whose gender is different than their own
teasing	Saying, writing, or doing things that makes fun of someone or puts them down in some way
transgender	When someone's sex assigned at birth is different from what they know their gender to be

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Using Pronouns

What Are Pronouns?

Pronouns are words that we use in the place of nouns. Personal pronouns substitute for a person's full name. "She/her", "he/him", and "they/them" are examples of pronouns. For example, "**Caroline** is very busy and **they** are constantly in meetings." While some people initially feel uncomfortable using "they" to refer to a single person, "they" has been used to refer to both single people and groups of people for centuries and is absolutely correct English usage.

Why Pronouns are Important

A feature of common English pronouns is that they can also signal the gender of the person they refer to. For this reason, many people want others to use specific pronouns when referring to them. It's good practice to share your own pronouns when meeting someone and ask them which pronouns they would like used to refer to them. This approach respects the choices that people make about their own identity and leads to more comfortable interactions.

To learn more, check out Pronouns: A guide from GLSEN

In an effort to support students who are more comfortable when designated by their pronouns, HCPSS students may opt to add pronouns they wish to have used to refer to themselves in various Canvas pages, including discussion posts, inbox messages and gradebooks.

Creating a Gender Inclusive Classroom Environment

What educators do and say as they teach or design and implement classroom routines has a great deal to do with students learning in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment.

Here are some tips for educators who want to create a gender inclusive classroom environment:

Expand students' knowledge of diversity by exposing them to role models through literature, lessons, and classroom guests.

Make sure the analogies you use when teaching don't always rely on hetero-normative or gender-normative images or viewpoints.

Find ways of grouping and lining up students other than "boys here, girls there" or "boys do this, girls do that."

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Monitor choice activity time to ensure that students are not segregating themselves by gender.

Use inclusive language when referring to students, families, or others outside of the classroom. Build knowledge of vocabulary like ally, respect, diverse, etc...

Recognize ways that you reinforce traditional gender stereotypes in your expectations of students and their work. When you hear students or adults making gender based assumptions, ask questions or suggest other language that is more inclusive.

Write math problems with contexts that include a variety of family structures and gender-expressions.

Adapted from Ready, Set, Respect GLSEN's Elementary Toolkit - 2016

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Elementary Resources

GSA-Network's Advisor Handbook (2020)

GLSEN Elementary Resources

Responding to Concerns: Teaching About Gender

Support (who to reach out to for help)

Mental and Emotional Health Resources

The Trevor Project
24-hour crisis hotline 1-866-488-7386 or text 'START' to 678-678

HopeWorks Howard County
24-hour helpline 410-997-2272

Grassroots Crisis Intervention
24-hour crisis hotline 410-531-6677
Suicide and Crisis Hotline 988

📖 Back to Table of Contents

School Rainbow Representatives

Every elementary, middle, and high school in the Howard County Public School System has at least one staff member who serves as a Rainbow Representative.

The goals and outcomes for Rainbow Representatives are as follows:

- To create a more welcoming community for LGBTQIA+ students
- To provide instructional support for educators
- To ensure each school within HCPSS is an ally and advocate for LGBTQIA+ students, staff, and families

Please click on the link below for a complete list of Rainbow Representatives at the elementary level. Select their name(s) to email them.

Elementary School Rainbow Representatives

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Rainbow Representatives and Club Sponsors

This list includes contact information for the Rainbow Representative and GSA/SAGA/Affinity Group sponsor at each school.

School Rainbow Representatives (links to HCPSS LGBTQIA+ website)

Elementary School Rainbow Club/Affinity Group Information

School Name	Sponsor Name	Club Name	Meeting Frequency
Talbott Springs ES	Lauren Sansone & Brian McMahon	Eagles United	Weekly, depends on availability and grade level

Middle School Rainbow Club Information

School Name	Sponsor Name	Club Name	Meeting Frequency
Bonnie Branch MS	Hannah Verlich, Debbie Germroth, and Amy Kelley	SAGA	Twice per month, Tues
Clarksville MS	Debbi Holihan	Rainbow Pride Safe Space	Once per month, last Tues before school
Dunloggin MS	Cara Wetmiller	SAGA	Twice per month, during lunch
Elkridge Landing MS	Shannon Townsend & Shayna Fastovsky	Safe Space Club	Weekly, Thurs after school
Ellicott Mills MS	Elizabeth Campbell Vidreiro & David Rosenstein	Skittles Club	Twice per month, Mon morning and Fri afternoon
Folly Quarter MS	Sasha Knight	Proud Allies	1-2 times per month, Weds during Flex Time
Glenwood MS	Kelly Storr	Cobra Pride	Bi-weekly, Tues after school

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Hammond MS	Kortni Corbett	HMS GSA	Contact for info
Harpers Choice MS	Melissa Rogers and Madisyn Aman	Rainbow Alliance Club (RAC)	Weekly, Weds after school
Homewood Center	Sandy Fishbein	Rainbow Youth	Twice per month
Mayfield Woods MS	Laura Kooyman	Bulldog Pride Alliance (BPA)	Weekly, Thurs after school
Patapsco MS	Morgan Kempthorn, Nancy Herold	Safe Space Club	Once per month, Weds during club day
Patuxent Valley MS	Kayla Hughes	Lavender Leadership	Weekly, Weds after school
Wilde Lake MS	Sarah Lynn Nibber	WLMS GSA	Once per month on half days

High School Rainbow Club Information

School Name	Sponsor Name	Club Name	Meeting Frequency
Atholton HS	Carolyn Pilcher	PRISM-GSA (Pride, Resilience, Inclusiveness, Support, Mindfulness)	Weekly, Mon after school
Centennial HS	Suzi Gerb	Centennial SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Alliance)	Weekly, Weds after school
Glenelg HS	John Ballentine	Sexuality and Gender Acceptance Club (SAGA)	Weekly, Tues after school
Hammond HS	Danielle DuPuis, Amy Holly, Theresa Reisman, Marguerite Hart @hahs_saga on Insta	Sexuality and Gender Alliance Club (SAGA)	Weekly, Weds during Flex Time
Homewood Center	Sandy Fishbein	Rainbow Youth	Twice per month
Howard HS	David Sleichter	Gay Straight Alliance	Weekly, Weds after

📖 Back to Table of Contents

		(GSA)	school
Long Reach HS	Alex Borleis & Sara Skinner	Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA)	Bi-weekly, Weds after school
Marriotts Ridge HS	Sydney Littman	Sexuality and Gender Alliance	Bi-weekly, Fri after school
Mt. Hebron HS	Allison Downey	Sexuality and Gender Alliance (SAGA)	Weekly, Weds during Flex Time
Oakland Mills HS	Jada Williams @omhs_gsa on Twitter, Insta, and tiktok	Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA)	Weekly, Tues after school
Reservoir HS	Suzanne Hughes	Gender and Sexuality Alliance	Weekly, Thurs after school
River Hill HS	Richard McCready	Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)	Weekly, Thurs after school
Wilde Lake HS	Brittany Franckowiak & Katie Palmateer	Gay/Straight Alliance	Weekly, Weds after school

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Feeder School Chart

School feeders for the 2022-2023 school year. For a specific address/area, check the HCPSS School Attendance Areas site.

Dates of Importance

No Name Calling Week (Mid-January)
https://www.glsen.org/no-name-calling-week

Day of Silence with GLSEN (usually in April) April 22, 2022
https://www.glsen.org/day-of-silence

Harvey Milk Day (May 22, 2023)
https://gsanetwork.org/resources/harvey-milk-day/

Stonewall Anniversary (June 28-July 3, 1969)
https://www.history.com/topics/gay-rights/the-stonewall-riots

Pride Month (entire month of June)
https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/lgbt-pride-month.html

Solidarity Week with GLSEN (mid-late fall)
https://www.glsen.org/programs/solidarity-week

Suicide Prevention Month (September)
https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/promote-national-suicide-prevention-month/

National Coming Out Day (October 11)
https://www.hrc.org/resources/national-coming-out-day

International Pronouns Day (3rd Wednesday of October each year)
https://pronounsday.org/

Transgender Awareness Week (November 13-November 19 each year)
https://www.glaad.org/transweek

Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20th of each year)
https://www.glaad.org/tdor

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Human Rights Day (December 10th every year)
https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day

📖 Back to Table of Contents

General Resources

Learning for Justice (formerly Teaching Tolerance) is a place for educators to find thought-provoking news, conversation and support for those who care about diversity, equal opportunity and respect for differences in schools.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

HCPSS Partners (with an LGBTQIA+ Focus)

CARY (Community Allies of Rainbow Youth) works with allies within schools to advocate for a safe and affirming learning environment for LGBTQIA+ youth, raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues, increase understanding of youth experiences across the LGBTQIA+ community, and provide resources and support for all LGBTQIA+ allies. Contact: CARYmembership@gmail.com

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Howard County is the local branch of the national organization works to achieve equality for all in schools. Their mission is to support parents and caregivers of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer children. We welcome all people – gay, straight, bisexual, transgender and queer – as well as their families and friends. Together, we support each other, educate the broader community and advocate for equality. Contact: howard.jumel@pflaghoco.org

Unmatched Athlete is a Maryland-based non-profit that encourages youth who identify as LGBTQIA+ and allies ages 5-18 to participate in sports and fitness. We encourage our youth to explore their athletic creativity and become well-versed student athletes that excel beyond their time in school. Our hope is that every youth that participates in our organization becomes an instrumental member of the LGBTQIA+ community and beyond. Contact: info@unmatchedathlete.org

Charitable Organizations

Local Organizations

Baltimore Safe Haven provides opportunities for a higher quality of life for transgender people in Baltimore City living in survival mode.

CARY (Community Allies of Rainbow Youth) works with allies within schools to advocate for a safe and affirming learning environment for LGBTQIA+ youth, raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues, increase understanding of youth experiences across the LGBTQIA+ community, and provide resources and support for all LGBTQIA+ allies.

Free State Justice is Maryland's statewide advocacy non-profit that seeks to improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer ("LGBTQIA") Marylanders.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Howard County is the local branch of the national organization works to achieve equality for all in schools. Their mission is to support parents and caregivers of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer children. We welcome all people – gay, straight, bisexual, transgender and queer – as well as their families and friends. Together, we support each other, educate the broader community and advocate for equality.

SMYAL (Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders) is located in Washington DC and provides youth programs, leadership, resources, and housing for LGBTQIA+ youth.

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender, trans-led community power building organization dedicated to Maryland's trans community.

Unmatched Athlete is a Maryland-based non-profit that encourages youth who identify as LGBTQIA+ and allies ages 5-18 to participate in sports and fitness. We encourage our youth to explore their athletic creativity and become well-versed student athletes that excel beyond their time in school. Our hope is that every youth that participates in our organization becomes an instrumental member of the LGBTQIA+ community and beyond.

National Organizations:

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 10 million people in over a150 countries and territories who campaign to end abuse of human rights.

The Attic Youth Center creates opportunities for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQIA+) youth to develop into healthy, independent, civic-minded adults within a safe and supportive community, and promotes the acceptance of LGBTQIA+ youth in society. The Attic is proud to be Philadelphia's only independent LGBTQIA+ youth center.

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) rewrites the script for LGBTQIA+ acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.

GLSEN is a national organization for educators and students who want to create schools where differences are respected. They support Safe Space training, a Day of Silence event, GSA clubs, and other resources for educators.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

It Gets Better Project is a nonprofit organization with a mission to uplift, empower, and connect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth around the globe.

Lambda Legal is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and everyone living with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work.

Matthew Shepard Foundation amplifies the story of Matthew Shepard to inspire individuals, organizations and communities to embrace the dignity and equality of all people.

National LGBT and Health Education Center provides educational programs, resources, and consultation to health care organizations with the goal of optimizing quality, cost-effective health care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and all sexual and gender minority (LGBTQIA+) people.

National Youth Advocacy Coalition dissolved in 2011

SERVICES & ADVOCACY FOR GAY LESBIAN BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER ELDERS INC. (SAGE)

is a national advocacy and services organization that's been looking out for LGBT elders since 1978. We build welcoming communities and keep our issues in the national conversation to ensure a fulfilling future for all LGBT people.

Stonewall Community Foundation is a public foundation that funds over 200 nonprofits a year, in more than 30 issue areas. It also houses five scholarship programs, including the largest in the country created to support LGBTQIA+ refugees and asylum seekers.

StopBullying.gov is a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Trans Lifeline is a grassroots hotline and microgrants 501(c)(3) non-profit organization offering direct emotional and financial support to trans people in crisis – for the trans community, by the trans community. They're run by and for trans people.

Trans Youth Equality Foundation provides education, advocacy and support for transgender and gender non-conforming children and youth and their families. Our mission is to share information about the unique needs of this community, partnering with families, educators and service providers to help foster a healthy, caring, and safe environment for all transgender children.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer & questioning (LGBTQIA+) young people under 25.

The Tyler Clementi Foundation was founded by the Clementi family to prevent bullying through inclusion and the assertion of dignity and acceptance as a way to honor the memory of Tyler: a son, a brother, and a friend.

Youth Resource is a youth-led grant making, community organizing and leadership development non-profit organization that helps youth address our most critical community and institutional challenges on our own terms. As mandated by our by-laws, YAR is governed by a majority youth Board of Directors currently comprised of 20 youth and young adults.

📖 Back to Table of Contents

Works Cited

Ho, Jeannie, and Suzanne Funk. "Promoting Young Children's Social and Emotional Health." *Young Children,* vol. 73, no. 1, Mar. 2018, www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2018/promoting-social-and-emotional-health. Accessed 8 Aug. 2022.

International OCD Foundation. iocdf.org/. Accessed 2 Aug. 2022.

Johns Hopkins Medicine. www.hopkinsmedicine.org/. Accessed 2 Aug. 2022.

"KidsHealth for Kids." KidsHealth, Nemours Foundation, kidshealth.org/en/kids/. Accessed 28 July 2022.

"LGBTQ-Visibility and Integration in Elementary Schools." GLSEN, www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/GLSEN_LGBTQ_Integration_Elementary_Resource_2019_1.pdf. Accessed 28 July 2022.

McGarry, Robert A., et al. Ready, Set, Respect!: GLSEN's Elementary School Toolkit. 2016. GLSEN, www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/GLSEN%20Ready%20Set%20Respect.pdf. Accessed 28 July 2022.

"Optional Pronoun Settings Now Available in Canvas." HCPSS News, 12 Apr. 2021, news.hcpss.org/news-posts/2021/04/optional-pronoun-settings-in-canvas/. Accessed 28 July 2022.

"Pronoun Guide." GLSEN, www.glsen.org/activity/pronouns-guide-glsen. Accessed 28 July 2022.