



Growing Healthy Schools: Supporting Gender Inclusivity



How can students have a voice?

Student "voices, leadership, and enthusiasm create increased and meaningful engagement." ¹ A student-led group such as a gay-straight alliance (GSA) that is inclusive and welcoming to all students can create awareness and develop initiatives which develop self-esteem and self-efficacy and promote respect for others ².

How can the social and physical environments support everyone at school?

Information about gender is shared with students through everyday interactions. Consider the language that is used at the school and how the environment can be more inclusive ³. Think about the school beyond the classroom; how can athletics, field trips, and washrooms be gender-friendly? ⁴.

How can policy support gender inclusivity?

Policies and resources can help provide or advocate for an environment free from gender expression and gender identity discrimination ⁵. Discover what policies are in place in your school board and get inspiration from others at gegi.ca.

How does the curriculum represent gender?

Incorporating 2SLGBTQ+ inclusive reading material into teaching is one way to help students feel welcome ⁶. Lesson plans and teaching resources that avoid gendered language can also be used to ensure students feel included and reflected in the teaching material.

What home and community connections might be beneficial?

Create a welcoming space ⁷ for families. "Family engagement that is intentional, inclusive, and consistent has positive effects for the whole school community" ⁸. If students need additional support, a strong home-school connection can ensure help is provided in a meaningful way.

Helpful Resources

GLSEN.org:

- [GSA Resources](#)

Egale.ca:

- [Building Inclusive Schools](#)
- [Tips on how to become an affirming adult](#)

Gegi.ca:

- [Tip sheets](#)
- [Policy Finder](#)

Health Unit:

- [Human Development and Sexual Health Curriculum Supports](#)

Welcomingschools.org:

- [Lesson plans](#)

[Gender Creative Kids](#):

- [Parents](#)

References:

1. Canadian Healthy Schools Alliance (2021). Canadian Healthy School Standards. Ottawa, Ontario. Available at www.healthyschoolsalliance.ca/en/resources, page 16.
2. Foundations for Healthy School (2014)
3. Gegi's Tips for Welcoming Gender Diversity in your Classroom <https://www.gegi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Gegis-Tips-for-Welcoming-Gender-Diversity-in-Your-Classroom.pdf>
4. Gegi Starter Kit (2021). <https://www.gegi.ca/resources/#starter-kit>
5. Find Policies: <https://www.gegi.ca/find-policies/>
6. Reading LGBTQ+ Inclusive Children's Books in Schools: <https://welcomingschools.org/resources/using-lgbtq-inclusive-childrens-books>
7. Involving parents in the school: tips for school councils (2022). The Government of Ontario. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/involving-parents-school-tips-school-councils>
8. Engage Families. Healthier Together, Alberta Health Services (2022). <https://schools.healthiertogether.ca/en/take-action/get-ideas-that-work/engage-families/>