

LGBTIQ events provide opportunity for recognition and inclusion



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Specific days of recognition or celebration are an opportunity to reflect on how we incorporate and include LGBTIQ perspectives in our schools and subject areas. It is important to ensure students see themselves reflected in the curriculum content, so they more fully relate and engage with the information covered. Examples could include events of note, like Mardi Gras or Stonewall Riots in History, inclusive texts in Primary and English classes, reference to the Yogyakarta Principles in human rights discussions in Geography or Society and Culture, and recognition of diverse families and relationships in PDHPE.

Already this year, there have been a number of LGBTIQ dates of significance — including Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, Transgender Day of Visibility, Lesbian Day of Visibility and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) — each of which have their own history and purpose, and seek to recognise the experiences of a particular group of people within the LGBTIQ rainbow.



Schools should also reflect on whether local school policies are inclusive of LGBTIQ people, their safety and their wellbeing. The Department's document *'Every student is known, valued and cared for in our schools'* communicates that a safe school is one that is free from physical and emotional harm, and that schools can promote positive mental health through school initiatives. It also identifies LGBTIQ students as those that are more vulnerable to experiencing lower levels of connectedness (which results in lower educational and wellbeing outcomes). Therefore, schools should take steps to ensure LGBTIQ students do not become disengaged and disconnected, through a variety of school-base initiatives. Schools are also encouraged to connect with the local community and creatively utilise school structures and resources in order to ensure that every student is known, valued and cared for.

One action that schools can take is to create a Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) to:

- recognise, support and value the diversity of students (or groups of students)
- empower students to take action to recognise and celebrate days of significance
- facilitate student voice and ownership to create safe and supportive learning environments
- discuss initiatives to support more vulnerable groups of students (including LGBTIQ students).

Other actions include recognising LGBTIQ-significant days in a variety of ways, ensuring LGBTIQ students know how to access local community-based services if they wish to do so and making sure LGBTIQ-inclusive

resources are available for students in the school library.

The Teachers Federation Library holds a range of resources that members can borrow, including some specifically produced for children, young adults and teachers. This can assist members in ensuring they are comfortable with the story and content of a book before recommending it for purchase or incorporating it into the classroom curriculum.

Upcoming significant LGBTIQ dates include:

- Pride month: June
- International Non-Binary People's Day: 14 July
- Wear it Purple Day: 28 August
- Bisexuality Day: 23 September
- LGBTI History Month: October
- International Lesbian Day: 8 October
- Intersex Awareness Day: 26 October
- Intersex Solidarity Day: 8 November
- International Day of Tolerance: 16 November (UN observance)
- Transgender Remembrance Day: 20 November
- World AIDS Day: 1 December (UN observance)
- Human Rights Day: 10 December (UN observance)