Diversity in Queensland schools fact sheet for students

Every student is welcome in our state schools, which are a reflection of Queensland's communities.

The Department of Education is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ⁺) students.

The department supports state schools to respond to the individual needs of all students, ensuring your wellbeing is nurtured and your learning is maximised.

This fact sheet provides information and guidance to help LGBTIQ⁺ students access advice and support to feel safe and supported at school.

Talk to someone

The best way to start thinking about the support you may need to feel safe and supported at school is to talk with someone you trust.

Tell the person how you are feeling, discuss what you might need and ask for their advice.

For example, you may want to start by:

- speaking with your parents or carers
- making a time to talk with your school's Guidance Officer
- talking with a trusted teacher or other school staff member who you feel comfortable with
- seeking support from a trusted friend.

Think about what support you may need at school

After talking to a trusted person, you may want to think about the types of support that could be put in place at school to help you to feel more comfortable.

A good place to start is to read Diversity in Queensland schools – Information for principals. This resource helps schools to support LGBTIQ⁺ students.

Reading this resource will give you information about laws that protect LGBTIQ⁺ students from discrimination, as well as things that your school can do to support you.

If you can, it would be great to have a conversation with your parents or carers, or other support person, about specific things your school could do to support you and your family.

Maybe you could write a list together based on the topics discussed in the document.

Meet with your school

After you talk with your parents, carers or support person about ways your school can help you feel more comfortable, they might set up a meeting at your school to talk about how they can support you.

Your parents, carers or support person will know the best way to do this. They can get some tips from Diversity in Queensland schools – Fact sheet for parents.

Participate in your school community

Diversity in Queensland's student population is celebrated and welcomed.

All students are encouraged to have an active voice in their school community, and LGBTIQ⁺ students are no exception. There are many ways to participate in your school community and to promote what is important to you. You may want to:

- Sign up to be part of your school's student representative group to advocate for and advise on important issues.
- Talk to one of your teachers about organising an activity for an upcoming LGBTIQ+ celebration event such as Wear It Purple Day, IDAHOBIT Day, or Pride Month.

Reach out for support

Sometimes it is hard to talk about how you are feeling and what help you may need to feel supported.

There are people you can talk to who are experienced in supporting young people who need help and advice or are struggling. Reach out to the following organisations for support:

- eheadspace – an online counselling service that is confidential, free and secure. If you are aged 12 to 25 you can use this service to chat online, email or speak on the phone with a qualified youth mental health professional.
- Kids Helpline – a free and confidential counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25. You can talk to a counsellor on the phone, online or via email.
- Open Doors Youth Service – counselling and support services for LGBTIQ+ young people aged 12 to 24 and their families who live in South East Queensland.