

# OUT Standing

a toolkit for working inclusively  
with lesbian, gay, bisexual and  
transgender young people

2017



*YouthAction*  
NORTHERN IRELAND

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Shout Project was initially developed by YouthNet to respond to the needs of young people who identified as LGBT, and was published in 2003. The Project came about as a result of a partnership between YouthNet, Cara-Friend (GLYNI), YouthAction, The Rainbow Project and Opportunity Youth. As well as a research report into the experiences of young LGBT people in Northern Ireland, the Shout Project also produced OUTstanding Youth Work, a toolkit for working inclusively with LGBT young people.

In 2016, YouthNet, Cara-Friend and YouthAction revisited the project with the aim of updating the research to see what progress, if any, had been made in impacting positively on the lives of LGBT young people. Research carried out in April and May of 2016 by the three organisations informed the writing of Still Shouting, a report into the experiences of LGBT young people across Northern Ireland (published in 2017). The information and findings of this research was used to update OUTstanding Youth Work, which was carried out in 2017 by Cara-Friend and YouthAction.



**Cara-Friend** is an organisation dedicated to supporting, empowering, educating, and offering friendship to everyone in the LGBTQ+ community in Northern Ireland. The organisation runs an LGBTQ+ youth service to provide specific support for LGBTQ+ youth, aged 12-25. As well as running youth groups in several locations throughout Northern Ireland, Cara-Friend also provides one-to-one support to young LGBTQ+ people, and runs the LGBTQ+ Inclusive Schools Programme.

[www.cara-friend.org.uk](http://www.cara-friend.org.uk)

[@carafriendni](https://twitter.com/carafriendni)



**YouthAction Northern Ireland** is a regional voluntary youth organisation located in College Square North, Belfast with regional offices in Armagh, Enniskillen, Newry and the North West. For over 70 years we have strived to make a significant difference to the lives of young people and communities throughout Northern Ireland. We work to enable young people to achieve their full potential through innovative models of practice. Out & About is a project within the Equality Work with Young Women Unit which provides personal development programmes and mentoring for young women who identify as other than heterosexual alongside training for youth and community professionals.

[www.youthaction.org](http://www.youthaction.org)

[@outnaboutni](https://twitter.com/outnaboutni)

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# 1. Introduction

Youth workers and volunteers are the most important resources available in the youth setting to tackle the issue of sexuality and gender identity related bullying. However addressing bullying and LGBT-phobia can be challenging for some staff and volunteers. They can feel unsure and unsafe in taking this work forward and for some youth workers, challenging lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues will be challenging professionally and personally. For all these reasons, it is important that youth workers and volunteers are provided with the skills and knowledge required to effectively tackle homophobic bullying.

This resource is an updated and revised version of the 2004 edition of OUTstanding Youth Work, which was developed as a response to the findings of the 2003 Shout report. It found that capacity building around LGBT inclusive youth work was necessary and that a resource and training programme should be developed as part of that. The 2004 OUTstanding Youth Work resource served its purpose for over a decade, and in 2016 work began on updating the research as well as the resource.

The result is the updated OUTstanding Youth Work resource, specifically for youth workers to gain a better understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity and how to better deal with negative attitudes around these within their youth setting. This pack also contains activities that can use to begin to explore difference and sexual orientation with young people.

## **Aim of this resource:**

To increase the awareness of participants around issues of gender and sexual identity and to equip them with skills to effectively address issues affecting LGBT young people.

## **Objectives:**

- To provide a safe environment where participants can challenge their own prejudices.
- To explore the risks associated with *failing* to challenge homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.
- To create an open forum where participants can ask relevant questions in relation to LGBT young people.
- To assess the levels of risks and issues to which LGBT young people may be subjected.
- To allow participants the opportunity to test out their skills in relation to dealing with LGBT issues.

## **Tools:**

For some of the training exercises, there are handouts for facilitators to photocopy for participants prior to sessions. These are clearly signposted under the heading of Materials in the relevant exercises.

Most exercises and activities can be facilitated using a flipchart and markers. Group work is encouraged throughout the resource.

## 2. Name Game/Icebreakers

(Time: 5 - 25 minutes)

Icebreakers are used to help participants relax and ease into a meeting or training, and to help participants learn each other's names and personal/professional information. This is particularly important if the group members are meeting each other for the first time. Methods used here will be determined by the size of the group, the time you have available and the make-up of the group (have they worked together before etc.)

Be aware that some people find icebreakers and the name games particularly stressful and find it a very embarrassing aspect of the training, so keep the aim in mind - to get to know each other. This means that it can be as straight forward as getting people to write and wear a name badge. Other ideas are listed below.

### AIM

For participants to introduce themselves and get to know each other

#### Materials

None

#### Method

### Icebreaker 1

**Time: 2 mins per participant**

Participants introduce themselves to the group and highlight a few points about their employment, including their experience working with young people, and why they have come for the training.

### Icebreaker 2

**Time: 5 mins for paired interview and 2 mins for feedback from each participant**

Participants are asked to pair up with someone they do not know and carry out paired interviews, finding out appropriate information about their partner (e.g. where they live, hobbies, etc.) They then feed this information back to the group by introducing their partner to the larger group. Each person is given the opportunity to offer feedback.

### Icebreaker 3

**Time: 1 min for each participant**

Invite each participant to write their name on the flipchart and share with the group something about their name e.g. its origins, if they like it, etc.

### Icebreaker 4

**Time: 30 seconds per participant**

Participants share their name with the group and answer a question posed by the facilitator. You can use any of these or make up your own.

My name is \*\*\*\*\* and if I was a superhero I'd be \*\*\*\*\*

My name is \*\*\*\*\* and if I was a Little Miss or Mr. Man I'd be \*\*\*\*\*

My name is \*\*\*\*\* and the last boxset I watched was \*\*\*\*\*

My name is \*\*\*\*\* and my worst Christmas present was \*\*\*\*\*

My name is \*\*\*\*\* and my favourite film is \*\*\*\*\*

## 3. Hopes and fears exercises

(Time: 10 minutes)

It is important to explore the participants' hopes and fears in relation to the training. Participants may have anxieties about the subject matter, speaking in front of a larger group, getting things wrong, etc. If there is an opportunity to address their fears this can reassure participants, at the outset, that the training session will be a supportive learning environment.

Participants may also have various expectations of the training which you are unable to meet. It is important to address these at the start of the training so that the participants do not leave feeling disappointed.

There are a number of different ways you may find useful, here are two.

### Aim

To enable participants to express their hopes and fears to establish a comfortable and safe atmosphere within the group.

### Materials

Flipchart paper, post-it notes, pens.

### Method

#### Exercise 1

Split participants into pairs and ask them to talk about their fears and expectations for 5 mins. Then ask them for feedback which can be recorded on the flipchart. You should then comment on the feedback and reassure participants.

#### Exercise 2

Time: 2 mins to write on post-it notes and 5-10 mins approximately to go through the post-it notes with the group (depending on the size of the group)

Each participant is given 2 post-it notes and asked to write down one fear and one hope that they have in relation to the training. They are then invited to place this on the flipchart marked "hopes" and "fears". After all participants have stuck their post-its on the flipchart the facilitator then takes time to go through each comment.

## 4. Group Contract

(Time: 5 - 10 minutes)

It is important that there are agreed guidelines in relation to what will make the group a safe place to be in, what is appropriate and inappropriate during the training, and that participants are clear about these from the outset. A group contract may be drawn up in a number of different ways. Here are 3 ideas.

### Aim

To create an atmosphere of safety and comfort within the group.

### Materials

Flipchart paper and pens.

### Method

#### Contract 1

Have a prepared list in advance written on a flipchart. You can then read through these and then ask participants to comment and add their own ideas.

#### Contract 2

Ask participants, in small groups, to come up with a list that they think will make the group a safe place to be in. Small groups then feed these back to the larger group where the ideas are amalgamated and agreed upon.

#### Contract 3

Start with a blank page and allow the group to shout out what will make their group and the training safe.

### Facilitator tip:

It is important that, once a contract has been drawn up, all participants are asked to accept this way of working.

A number of points usually arise during this exercise. These may include respect, regular breaks, participation and confidentiality. It is important to go through these to ensure that people understand what is meant by each one.

It is also important to remind the group that:

They should take responsibility for what they share with the group; and

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and therefore they share with this in mind.

## 5. Definitions

(Time: 30 minutes)

### Aims

To assist the group in understanding the various identities included under the LGBT umbrella term.

To aid the group in developing their understanding of negative attitudes faced by young LGBT people.

### Materials

Flipchart paper and marker pens.

### Method

#### Exercise 1

The facilitator writes up 'LGBTQIA+' and, as a large group, the participants contribute what the letters stand for, and what those words mean.

Take definitions from glossary on page XX.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, interested, asexual, pansexual, polygender.

#### Exercise 2

As a large group, word-storm definitions and understanding of the words Biphobia, Homophobia, Transphobia and Heterosexism. Facilitator to provide group with actual definitions.

**Homophobia** - Negative attitudes or feelings towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people or those things associated with these groups of people. This can either at a personal level or at an institutional level where these attitudes impact on policy and actively discriminate against lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

**Heterosexism** - A set of assumptions and practices that promote heterosexual relationships as the only "natural" and valid form of sexual orientation - either deliberately through practice and policy or unintentionally. Heterosexism recognises (rewards) those who are heterosexual and ignores (penalises) those who are not.

**Transphobia** - Transphobia is the unrealistic or irrational fear and hatred of transgender people. Like all prejudice, it is based on negative stereotypes and misconceptions that are then used to justify and support hated, discrimination, harassment and violence toward people who are transgender.

**Biphobia** - Biphobia is a term used to describe the fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against bisexuality or people who are bisexual or perceived to be bisexual. Some consider the belief that people are either heterosexual or homosexual, and thus that bisexuality does not truly exist, to be biphobia



## Exercise 3 (Optional)

In small groups discuss the homophobic and heterosexist messages that can be directly and indirectly sent to young people from individuals and society.

Feedback findings to the large group.

### **Facilitator Tip:**

It would be useful for participants to discuss issues such as:

Allowing homophobic language to go unchallenged e.g. "that's so gay"

Laughing or making homophobic comments about a young person e.g. "Don't be such a big girl"

Excluding same sex relationships in personal development programmes

Perpetuating sexism through the use of gender roles or stereotyping

Assuming someone's gender based on their appearance

The hurt that can be caused by not referring to someone with their correct pronouns and preferred name



## 6. Minority Experience

(Time: 30 minutes)

### Aim:

To engage participants in an understanding of what it is like to be in a minority and to support an empathetic response to the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

### Materials:

Photocopies of hand-out on page \*\*.  
Flipchart paper and pens.

### Method

Provide each participant with a copy of the hand-out. Ask them individually to think of a time when they were in a minority (i.e. they were the only person like them in a larger group, or were one of only a small number of people in a larger group). Each participant should describe that time in as much detail as they wish.

Remind participants that you are hoping for them to share their stories with the group.

Ask participants to fill in the rest of the hand-out. How did the majority group act towards you and how did that make you feel?

Record feedback on the flipchart, noting down the way the majority group treated participants on one half of the flipchart and the feelings on the other

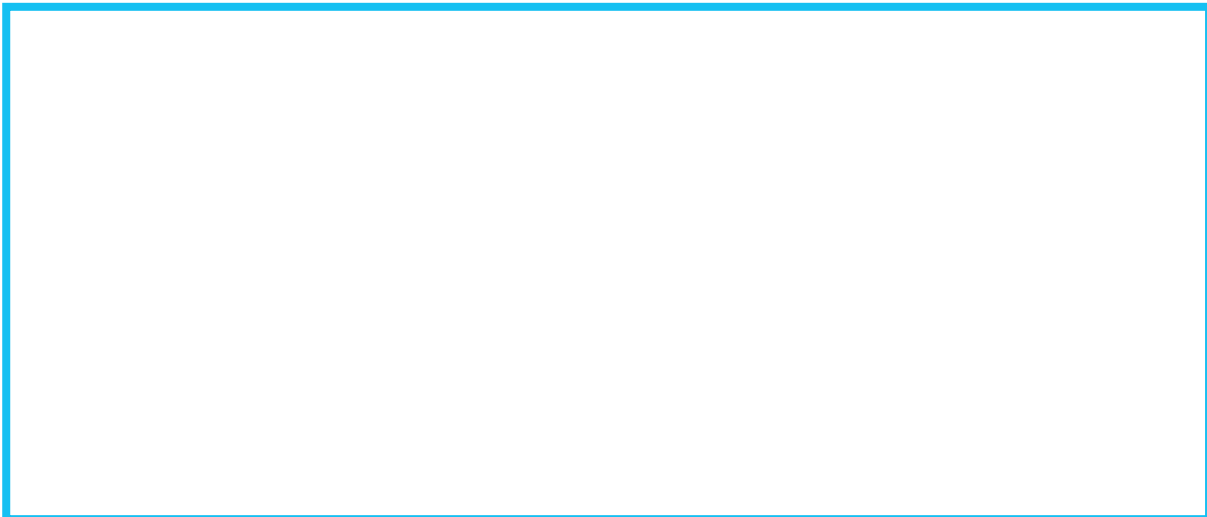
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are in a minority. The majority (heterosexual people and cisgender people - or those who identify with their birth gender) act in a variety of ways towards the LGBT people - from curiosity to hatred - the same as any majority group to a minority. LGBT people will experience many of the feelings that as a group you describe as your minority experience.

## 6. Minority Experience Exercise


Recall a situation where you were in a minority.



Describe the way in which members of the majority group behaved towards you.



Describe your feelings on how you were treated because you were in a minority.



# 7. What's it like in your Town?

## (Walking Debate)

(Time: 30 minutes)

### Aim:

To engage participants in understanding what messages communities provide regarding safety and inclusion to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

### Materials

A large room or open space. Pages with numbers 1-4 written on them.

### Method

Place the numbered pages on the floor across the room, in different locations.

Read a scenario to the participants and ask them to move to the number (located across the room) which is closest to their response. Encourage participants to take a position on each scenario and not be neutral.

Once participants have moved to their position, encourage them to discuss the reasons for their choice with each other. Ask for group feedback.

### Scenario 1

You are the leader of a youth group in your town. A young woman who was recently employed has come to you and told you that she is a lesbian. Do you think it is wisest for her to:

1. Come out to everyone and anyone?
2. Just tell a few close friends?
3. Don't tell anyone else, especially at work?
2. Tell the manager only?

### Scenario 2

How safe do you think it is for a trans person to transition where you live:

1. Very safe:
2. Quite safe?
3. Not very safe?
4. Very unsafe?



## Scenario 3

Your workplace team has won the football final and a local personality is funding a celebration party. You're aware that one of your male colleagues is bisexual and is in a relationship with a man. Would you prefer him to:

1. Come to the party alone?
2. Come with a female partner?
3. Come with his boyfriend, but refrain from touching?
4. Come with his boyfriend and display any appropriate display of affection in the same way that heterosexual employees might?

### **Facilitator tip:**

Note changes in participants' position and if not brought up by the group, signal why some people may feel, for example, that they live in a safe town but wouldn't want someone to show affection to their gay partner or come out to everyone and anyone.

### **Debriefing**

The messages you have been given about being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender are messages that LGBT people hear as well. They grow up and live in the same communities as you. What impact might these messages have on someone who is LGBT?



## 8. Labels/Identity

(Time: 30 minutes)

### Aim

To engage participants in understanding the impact of labels and stereotypes on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

### Materials

Flipchart paper and pens. Scissors.

### Method

Divide into two groups, provide each group with flipchart paper with a box drawn in the middle as shown below.

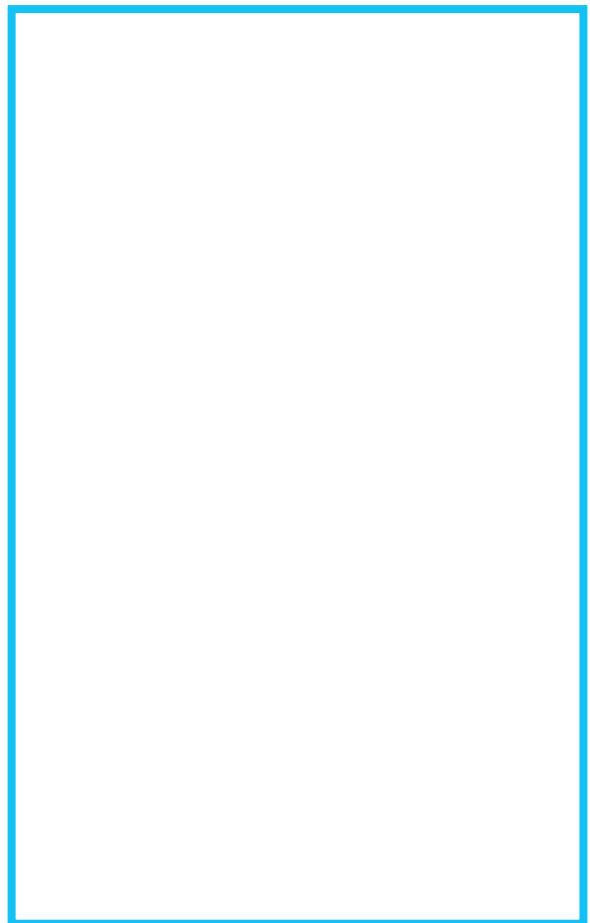
#### POSITIVE

Ask one group to write all the positive labels, terms, names, and stereotypes for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans people.



#### NEGATIVE

Ask the other group to write all the negative labels, terms, names and stereotypes for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans people.



Both groups should write outside the middle box. Give the participants time for each identity, prompting them with the next identity as they go.

### **Feedback following questions:**

1. What was it like to be writing the positive and negative labels?
2. Was it easy or difficult? Why?
3. Was it as easy/difficult with each identity? Were there some identities easier/more difficult?

Cut out the centre of each box from the flipchart paper. Have a volunteer stand with the sheet framing their face. Tell the participants the purpose of the frame is to show them every label/identity has a person behind it. Have the other group members read out the words the group wrote down.

**1. The positive labels** - Do you think that all gay men/Lesbians/bisexual people/trans people have these positive qualities? (Stereotypes) What effect do you think it might have on a young person if they didn't have these qualities?

**2. The positive labels** - Are the labels used for gay men masculine? Do gay and bisexual men get the message that they are men? Are the labels for lesbians and bisexual women feminine? What does this indicate to lesbian and bisexual women about their femininity?

**3. The negative labels** - Why do you think there are more negative labels and names?

4. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are faced with a lot of negativity. What might be the effect of this negativity on young gay, lesbian and bisexual people? What might the effect of the negativity have on trans people?

5. Are there as many labels, positive or negative, for trans people as there are for lesbian, gay and bisexual people? Why do you think that is?

### **Facilitator Notes:**

Hearing and seeing negative things about being gay or bisexual often leads gay or bisexual people to internalise these feelings, and feel bad about themselves. A young LGB person may have also learned to accept that being heterosexual is the norm and the correct way to be. The internalising of these feelings is called internalised homophobia.

Internalised transphobia has parallels with internalised homophobia although there are some differences. Transphobia originates from society's rigidity of gender "norms" and expectations of how men and women should behave. Transgender people also internalise messages that come at all of us about physically idealised images of men, women and the roles they are expected to play and conform to.

## 9. I've always wanted to know (Optional)

(Time: 35-45 minutes)

### Aim

To allow the opportunity for participants to ask all the questions they have ever had about LGBT issues.

### Materials

Flipchart, Pens, Post-it notes.

### Method

Participants are given post-it notes and invited to ask questions they've never dared ask or have never received an accurate answer to in relation to LGBT. These are then placed on a flipchart. The facilitator then reads the questions to the group discussion and feedback.

### Facilitator Tips:

Set the scene in your opening remarks that this is not a question and answer session but rather to facilitate group discussion - don't lead participants to expect you to give them answers.

Refer participants to contract if the discussion goes off track.

Remind participants about individuality - not all LGBT people are the same and think the same way.



## 10. Statistics Quiz

### Aim

Participants should acquire statistical information on LGBT issues and young people.

### Materials

Photocopies of quiz sheets on page 19, pens.

### Method

Distribute quiz sheets. Participants complete the quiz individually. Answers are then discussed in small groups. Facilitator provides accurate answers. Large group discussion follows on thoughts/feelings concerning these statistics.

## Statistics Quiz

### (with answers for facilitator)

1. In a group of 20 people, statistically, how many lesbian, gay or bisexual people could there be in the group?

A) 1      B) 3.5      C) 2

Answer: C) Approximately 2. Research over the last 50 years has indicated that approximately 10% (1 in 10) of the population identifies as LGB.

2. How many LGB young people could there be in Northern Ireland up to the age of 25?

A) 1,180      B) 60,953      C) 20,752

Answer: B) Based on the last NI census figures and the 10% figure there could be up to 60,953 LGB young people in NI under the age of 25.

3. In the Still Shouting 2017 report, what was the average age of an LGB person realising they were lesbian, gay or bisexual?

A) 12      B) 13      C) 14

Answer: A) The average age is 12.27 years for a young person to realise they are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

4. In the same report, what was the average age of an LGB person coming out for the first time?

A) 16      B) 17      C) 18

Answer: C) The average age of coming out to someone for the first time is 18.3 years old. This means there is a six-year gap between realising and coming out. Compared to research carried out in NI in 2003, this gap has actually increased by almost one year.

5. What percentage of young LGBT people in Northern Ireland feel compelled to move away from their family home due to their sexual orientation?

A) 10%      B) 26%      C) 45%

Answer: B) 26%; one in four people feel they have to leave their family homes in order to be able to be themselves.

6. What percentage of young people, who attended a youth group, received information about LGBT issues and identities at their youth club or group?

A) 23%      B) 42%      C) 61%

Answer: A) just 23% of LGBT people attending youth clubs or groups in Northern Ireland in 2017 said they receive information around minority sexual orientations and gender identities.

## 10. Statistics Quiz (Continued)

7. What percentage of young LGB people reported being aware of their sexual orientation while at school?

- A) 86%      B) 55%      C) 38%

Answer: A) 86%

8. What percentage of young LGBT people reported having received any information regarding LGBT issues and identities at school?

- A) 4%      B) 11%      C) 23%

Answer: B) 11%.

9. How many young people in Northern Ireland stated that they had experienced homelessness as a result of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity?

- A) 3%      B) 10%      C) 16%

Answer: A) 3%. This has come down significantly since 2003 when the figure from Shout research stood at 16%.

10. What percentage of young LGBT people have attempted suicide?

- A) 10%      B) 5%      C) 25%

Answer: C) 25% of young LGBT people have made an attempt on their own life.

11. What percentage of young LGBT are bullied in school as a result of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity?

- A) 24%      B) 46%      C) 68%

Answer: C) 68% of young people are bullied in school because they are LGBT. This highlights the need for other youth centred spaces to be inclusive, safe spaces for young LGBT people.

12. How many LGBT young people get information about gender identity and sexual orientation primarily from online sources?

- A) 72%      B) 63%      C) 54%

No answer for this one?

# 10. Statistics Quiz

(Handout)

1. In a group of 20 people, statistically, how many lesbian, gay or bisexual people could there be in the group?

- A) 1            B) 3.5            C) 2

2. How many LGB young people could there be in Northern Ireland up to the age of 25?

- A) 1,180        B) 60,953        C) 20,752

3. In the Still Shouting 2017 report, what was the average age of an LGB person realising they were lesbian, gay or bisexual?

- A) 12            B) 13            C) 14

4. In the same report, what was the average age of an LGB person coming out for the first time?

- A) 16            B) 17            C) 18

5. What percentage of young LGBT people in Northern Ireland feel compelled to move away from their family home due to their sexual orientation?

- A) 10%        B) 26%        C) 45%

6. What percentage of young people, who attended a youth group, received information about LGBT issues and identities at their youth club or group?

- A) 23%        B) 42%        C) 61%

7. What percentage of young LGB people reported being aware of their sexual orientation while at school?

- A) 86%        B) 55%        C) 38%

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12. How many LGBT young people get information about gender identity and sexual orientation primarily from online sources?

- A) 72%        B) 63%        C) 54%

# 11. What the Law says

## Aim

To engage participants in an understanding of the legal protections afforded LGBT people.

## Materials

Flipchart and Markers.

## Method

Divide the larger group into a number of smaller groups, asking them to wordstorm what legislative protection is in place for LGBT people that they are aware of. Also, ask the participants to consider:

1. Think of a situation that may arise where the legislation is relevant to your practice.
2. How can you positively support people to exercise their rights?

Feedback the findings centrally and record on a flipchart to collate the different legal protections as identified by the group.

## Legislation:

### **Equality (Sexual Orientation)**

#### **Regulations (NI) 2006**

The regulations give powers to outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services, the management and disposal of land or premises and the provision of education in schools. These regulations cover public bodies as

well as private, and specifically cover education. In practice it means, for instance, that a young person could not be refused entry to a youth organisation on the grounds that they were, or were thought to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or because they had relatives who were lesbian, gay or bisexual. It also means that youth organisations that do not treat homophobic bullying with the same level of seriousness as other forms of bullying could face legal action.

The regulations should have no effect on the programmes provided in youth organisations, provided that the subject of sexual orientation is approached in an appropriate manner that does not alienate or discriminate against same gender attracted individuals.

### **The Sex Discrimination**

#### **(Amendment of Legislation)**

#### **Regulations 2008**

Came into effect on the 6th of April and applies across the UK. It is now unlawful for providers of goods, facilities and services to discriminate against or harass people on grounds of gender reassignment. They are similar to the regulations banning discrimination in goods and services on grounds of sexual orientation.

# 11. What the Law says

## (Continued)

### ***Criminal Justice (No. 2) (Northern Ireland) Order 2004***

Hate crimes are those motivated by hate of a person as a result of their race, religion, disability or sexual orientation and may attract a higher sentence. Hate crime is particularly heinous as its impact has a ripple effect on the community rather than just one individual, installing fear and reinforcing the prejudice towards the entire group.

Homophobic and transphobic bullying are hate crimes and young people should be supported in reporting all forms of harassment, and/or verbal and physical abuse to the Minority Liaison Officer within the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

### ***Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003***

These Regulations protect all staff in an organisation against discrimination or harassment on the grounds of their sexual orientation. Discrimination involves treating one person less favourably than another on the grounds of their sexual orientation. Harassment is unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment. If employers do not take action to stop such behaviour against staff they run the risk of legal challenge. The regulations also

cover perceived sexual orientation (if someone bullies because they think the person is LGB even though they are not) or association (such as harassing a person over a friend or family member who is LGB).

Employers should be aware that they are responsible for the actions of their employees and what people may think of as 'banter' and 'having a laugh' can be deemed harassment if it is at the expense of someone else's dignity.

### ***Gender Recognition Register (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2005***

These Regulations create and control the Gender Recognition Register in Northern Ireland. This register is used to produce new birth certificates for those who have a full Gender Recognition Certificate. The regulations come from the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and provides for a person's change of gender to be officially recognised. To change gender a person must demonstrate gender dysphoria and have lived in the relevant gender for two years before applying for a gender recognition certificate.

## 12. Story Exercise

### Aim

To provide the participants with an opportunity to explore personal experiences from LGBT young people.

### Materials

Photocopies of short stories.  
Flipchart paper and marker pens.

### Method

Participants are given a young person's story and asked to discuss the following questions with their small group:

1. What are the issues for this young person?
2. What feelings might be experienced by this young person?
3. List the organisations/agencies/institutions/environments etc. where these feelings may be heightened for the young person?
4. As a youth worker how can you support this young person? (what are the implications for you as a worker?)



## 12. Story Copy Sheet

### Story 1 – John, Newry, 16

In school I had been getting bullied for a while by the other lads for being gay. I didn't even know if I was or not, I wasn't sure. I thought I might be bisexual. They used to call me all sorts of names: 'poofter', 'faggot' and 'queer', write things like that on my books and on my locker.

At one stage the other lads wouldn't let me get changed with them for PE and threw me out of the changing rooms. I told the PE teacher who shrugged it off, and said it might be best if I didn't get changed with them. Since then I've been getting changed in one of the toilet cubicles, but the bullying is like torture and I get picked on when we're playing football.

Lately, I've been feeling really down. I've even considered killing myself – it's that bad. I burst into tears in French class yesterday so I had to tell my French teacher what was happening. I was told to 'man up' and that 'boys will be boys'. I feel like I can't turn to anyone, I don't know what to do.

### Story 2 – Charlie, Enniskillen, 14

For as long as I can remember I've never felt right, I've always felt like I don't fit in. Over the past 2/3 years it's definitely gotten worse. I've always been the tomboy in my house, where I have all sisters, but I feel like it might be more than that. I'm really confused though: why do I feel like I'm in the wrong body?

I feel like a boy so I've asked people to call me Charlie instead of Charlotte. I've started wearing more boys' clothes when I'm not in school, though my mum keeps putting my older sisters' clothes in my room when they're done with them. I still have to wear my girls' uniform, of course, but I hate it. I get slagged at school all the time by the other girls. None of them want to sit with me, none of them want me to change with them. I don't feel like I can tell my mum how I really feel – how would she accept that I want to be a boy?

### Story 3 – Sarah, Belfast, 15

Me and the girls were out last night. We managed to get fake IDs and got into one of the clubs. We had a few drinks, it was great craic. Everyone was messing around. I ended up kissing my mate, Rose. I thought it was just for a laugh at first, but I really got into it, it felt good to me. Rose pulled away. I went to kiss her again and she called me a dyke. She wouldn't talk to me for the rest of the night. I ended up having to make my own way home in a taxi, and I was supposed to be staying in her house because her parents were away. I arrived home crying.

My parents were really angry with me, but being drunk is the least of my worries. All my mates have been posting on Facebook that I'm a lesbian, that I made a move on Rose. I feel awful. I don't know what to do. The worst part is I think they're right.

## 13. Risk Assessment (Optional)

### Aim

To assist the group in understanding the increased risk young LGBT people face in our society.

### Materials

Flip chart paper and marker pens.  
Photocopied list of scenarios on page 25 for each participant

### Method

Provide each participant with scenarios and ask them to highlight if they feel the scenarios present high, medium or low risk for young people.

Participants to form small groups. Within the group, participants share thoughts and come to a consensus regarding what they consider the top three high risk activities/situations, providing reasons. Each group to present findings back to large group.

1. Two girls walking through the grounds of city hall hand in hand
2. A young male coming out as bisexual to his year group
3. A gay man walking home alone at night
4. Two girls in the same class dating one another
5. A 14 year old coming out as gay to his peer group
6. Two girls kissing in the City Centre
7. A young male telling other members in the youth club that he likes to wear female clothing
8. A young male fancying his male teacher
9. A teacher allowing homophobic comments to pass unchallenged within the classroom
10. A young person transitioning in school
11. A young person using an internet chat room to meet new people
12. Two boys kissing in your town centre



## 13. Risk Assessment Worksheet

Photocopy and distribute to participants

1. Two girls walking through the grounds of city hall hand in hand
2. A young male coming out as bisexual to his year group
3. A gay man walking home alone at night
4. Two girls in the same class dating one another
5. A 14 year old coming out as gay to his peer group
6. Two girls kissing in your City Centre
7. A young male telling other members in the youth club that he likes to wear female clothing
8. A young male fancying his male teacher
9. A teacher allowing homophobic comments to pass unchallenged within the classroom
10. A young person transitioning in school
11. A young person using an internet chat room to meet new people
12. Two boys kissing in your town centre

# 14. Carousel

(Time: 45 minutes)

## Aim

To raise participants' skills in dealing with situations relating to LGBT young people.

## Materials

Chairs – 1 per individual

Statements – photocopy form page 27 and cut into strips

## Method

Allow 20-30 minutes for exercise. Depending on number of participants, and 10 minutes for reflection time.

Half the chairs used for participants are placed facing out in a small circle. The remaining chairs are placed in a large circle around the smaller circle. These chairs are positioned so that everyone sitting in a chair in the smaller circle can talk to someone in the larger circle easily.

The 'workers' sit in the external circle, the 'young people' sit in the internal circle. Each 'young person' has a statement that they will read to the 'worker'. The worker will discuss this for 2 minutes. Once the 2 minutes are up the 'young person' will move in a clockwise direction and repeat the statement to another 'worker'.

Once every worker and young person has met they will swap over roles. Different statements can be handed out for the second half of the exercise.

After the exercise participants will have the opportunity to discuss their feelings, and to reflect on the statements.

## 14. Carousel Worksheet

I think I'm gay.

Sometimes when I wake up I feel male, other days I wake up and feel female.

I have a boyfriend but I fancy girls.

My Dad always says that he hates gay people. How am I meant to come out to him?

I self-harm as I feel trapped in the wrong body.

My religion is against homosexuality. I feel isolated as I think I might be lesbian.

I don't identify as male or female, I am non-binary. People don't seem to get this, they keep assuming I am male.

I'm afraid to tell my mates on the football team that I'm gay.

I told my mum I was bisexual and now I have a girlfriend. She has said she will disown me.

I am being bullied in my school – some of the other girls keep calling me names because they think I'm lesbian. I don't know what to do.

I like to fantasise about other boys. Does that make me gay?

I want to be known as Charlotte from now on, instead of Jack. My school won't listen to me though.

I don't know if I'm straight, gay or bisexual. I'm confused and people keep asking me what I identify as. The truth is I don't know.

## 15. Glossary

### **Asexual**

A person who lacks sexual feelings or desires. They may form romantic non-sexual connections.

### **Birth sex / Biological sex**

The sex that a person is assigned at birth, based on your sexual organs alone.

### **Bisexual (Bi)**

A person who is physically, sexually and/or emotionally attracted to both men and women.

### **Cisgender**

A person or people whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

### **Cisnormativity**

The assumption that all people are cisgender, i.e. have a gender identity which matches their birth sex.

### **'Coming Out' (of the closet)**

A process that involves someone accepting their own minority sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, etc.) or transgender identity, and informing someone or some people about it. This is rarely a once off event in someone's life, and can take place multiple times in a lifetime. It is necessary because we live in a heterosexist society, where all people are assumed to be heterosexual.

### **Gay**

Generally used to describe men who are physically, sexually and/or emotionally attracted to other men. It can also be used as an umbrella term to describe all homosexual people, i.e. men and women.

### **Gender Expression**

The way in which a person expresses their gender identity, typically through their appearance, dress and behaviour. Preferred or chosen pronouns, as well as a preferred name, can be part of one's gender expression.

### **Gender Identity**

A person's own sense of having a particular gender, which may or may not correspond with their birth sex.

### **Heterosexism**

Discrimination or prejudice against homosexuals on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation. It can also be the societal assumption that everyone is heterosexual.

### **Heterosexual**

A person who is physically, sexually and/or emotionally attracted to members of the opposite sex.

## **Homophobia**

The dislike of or prejudice towards homosexual people. Homophobic is the adjective form of this term used to describe the qualities of these characteristics, while homophobe is the noun form given as a title to individuals labelled with homophobic characteristics.

## **Interested**

Having interest or curiosity with regards one's own sexual orientation. Someone who is interested might not be sure about their sexual orientation and may be interested in experimenting, or exploring it more to better understand what they identify as themselves.

## **Internalised Homophobia**

This is defined as the involuntary belief by gay men and lesbians that the homophobic lies, stereotypes and myths about them are true. This means the individual struggles to come to terms with their own same-sex attractions and suffers from distress as a result of their own negative attitudes towards their own sexual orientation.

## **Intersex**

A term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes, or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female.

## **Lesbian**

A woman who is physically, sexually and/or emotionally attracted to other women.

## **Non-binary (Genderqueer)**

This is a catch-all category for gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine – identities which are thus outside of the gender binary and cisnormativity.

## **Pansexual**

A person who is sexually interested in other people regardless of gender including males, females, gender fluid, intersex, androgynous, agender, non-binary etc.

## **Polygender**

Polygender can be translated literally as 'many genders'. Polygender people experience multiple gender identities, either simultaneously or varying between them. These can be male, female and/or non-binary identities.

## **Polysexual**

The attraction to multiple genders. Bisexuality and pansexuality are forms of polysexuality. Polysexuality generally rejects the idea of a gender binary (only male/female), rather than a spectrum of genders.



### ***Queer***

This is a reclaimed umbrella term used to describe the LGBT and general non-heterosexual communities. The word is becoming more common in its usage, especially for homosexual women and bisexuals who may object to being called 'gay', which is used more often to describe homosexual men.

### ***Questioning***

Someone who is unsure of, or is re-examining one's previously assumed sexual orientation or gender identity.

### ***Sexual Orientation***

A person's sexual identity in relation to the gender to which they are attracted, including heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, etc.

### ***Transgender (Trans)***

Denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with their assigned birth sex.

### ***Transition / Transitioning***

The journey a transgender person takes from the gender they were assigned at birth to the gender they feel is their true gender. This varies depending on the needs and desires of the individual undergoing the transition process. An individual may choose any combination of social, medical and legal steps that will help that person achieve the greatest level of comfort with their body and social roles.

### ***Transphobia***

The dislike of or prejudice towards transgender people. Transphobic is the adjective form of this term used to describe the qualities of these characteristics. Transphobia can also include the rejection of the concept that gender can differ from birth/biological sex, as well as the rejection of multiple genders beyond the male/female binary.

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Our thanks also to the funders, without whom the design and printing of this pack would not have been possible:



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