

# “WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?”

PREVENTING HOMOPHOBIC, BIPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

## WHAT DOES WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE? MEAN?

There are times in everyone’s life when they feel excluded, experience name calling or threatening behaviour. It can happen because people think someone is different from them or sometimes for no reason at all.

The What’s The Difference? campaign recognises that many young people have similar experiences of feeling different, of trying to fit in and may have experienced bullying at some point in their lives.

This resource was developed with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people. They feel that many LGBT young people experience bullying because they are seen to be different from others, but there are often more similarities than differences and only by working together can we stop people getting bullied!

Some of the content in this resource comes from ‘Bullying...what can I do?’ a resource produced by respectme, Scotland’s Anti-Bullying Service: [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)

## SO, WHAT DO ALL THE WORDS MEAN?

### Gender identity

How we feel about ourselves – like a woman, man, neither or both.

### Sexual orientation

Is about how you see yourself and who you fancy/love.

### Lesbian

A woman who fancies/loves other women.

### Gay

A man who fancies/loves other men. It can sometimes be used to describe a woman who fancies/loves other women.

### Bisexual

A person who fancies/loves men and women.

### Transgender

How we feel about ourselves – like a woman, man, neither or both, is different from what people expected from us when we were born. This includes a wide range of people including transsexuals. For more info go to: [www.scottishtrans.org](http://www.scottishtrans.org)

### Heterosexual/‘straight’

A man who fancies/loves women or a woman who fancies/loves men.

### Homophobia

The dislike, fear or hatred of lesbian and gay people.

### Biphobia

The dislike, fear or hatred of bisexual people.

### Transphobia

The dislike, fear or hatred of transgender people.

### Outing

Having someone else tell other people about your sexual orientation or transgender identity, usually without your permission or without you knowing.

“HOMOPHOBIA, BIPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA  
ARE IRRATIONAL FEARS & HATRED  
WHICH IN TIME  
WE WILL ERADICATE TOGETHER”

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is behaviour that can make you feel frightened, left out and hurt. This *might* look like:

- Being called names, being teased or made fun of
- Being punched, tripped up, or any physical attack
- Having your stuff stolen or damaged, like your mobile
- Cyberbullying through social networking sites, abusive emails or texts
- Being targeted because of who you are or how someone sees you

Some people are aware of what they are doing but others are not always aware that they are hurting people’s feelings. For many people bullying happens over and over again but something only needs to happen once for you to feel worried or scared.

It’s important to remember that bullying is never acceptable; it doesn’t make you a stronger person and it should never be seen as a normal part of growing up!

If you are being beaten-up, having items stolen from you or threatened then there are laws to protect you and this should be reported to the police.

NOW YOU’VE  
REACHED THE END  
OF THE GUIDE  
ASK YOURSELF:

# “WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?”

## WHY DO PEOPLE GET BULLIED?

People get bullied for lots of reasons or sometimes for no reason at all! People can also get bullied just for being seen as different. **Some** reasons can be:

- Where you live
- Being lesbian, gay, bisexual or someone thinking you are
- Being transgender or someone thinking you are
- Disability or someone thinking you have a disability
- The colour of your skin or where you are from
- Religious beliefs or someone thinking you have particular religious beliefs
- What clothes you wear
- Even what football team you support!

“IF YOU ARE  
EXPERIENCING BULLYING  
YOU SHOULD REMEMBER  
IT IS NEVER YOUR FAULT  
AND YOU SHOULD  
NEVER  
BLAME YOURSELF”

## WHY DO SOME PEOPLE BULLY OTHERS?

There are lots of different reasons why some people bully others, **some** possibilities include:

- Being scared of, or actually being bullied themselves
- Taking out their frustrations on others
- To feel more important than others
- They think it makes them look cool and will help them fit into a group

“LOVE  
HAS NO  
GENDER”

## HOMOPHOBIA, BIPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

This dislike, fear or hatred of LGBT people often comes from the things we hear on the TV, in magazines and newspapers, from friends and family or even in music. Some people are scared that they will be mistaken for being LGB or T so want to show they are really different!

It is these feelings that result in LGBT young people being treated differently and can lead to people being judged, being bullied or violent behaviour.

“HOW CAN YOU  
DISLIKE, HATE OR FEAR  
SOMEONE JUST BECAUSE OF THEIR  
SEXUAL ORIENTATION  
OR GENDER IDENTITY?”

## HOMOPHOBIA

Hate, bullying, homophobic killing this is a message for anyone willing.

To listen, to fight, to stand up for others whether it’s a stranger, a friend, a sister or brother

Fear, hurt, pain, sadness  
homophobia is born from natural badness.

Why should someone be shown so much hate?  
Why should they have higher suicide rates?

We must keep on fighting for the good of our young.  
So they can live in a world that’s full of fun.

Take out the phobia, take out the hate.  
Help those that we love before it’s too late.

By Craig Cochrane, LGBT NYC Elder

A POEM

## WHAT DOES HOMOPHOBIC, BIPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC BEHAVIOUR LOOK LIKE?

These behaviours can take lots of forms but below are *some* examples:

- Someone being called names, e.g. 'poof', 'dyke', 'tranny'
- Aggressive behaviour specifically towards someone because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender
- Spreading rumours or 'outing' someone as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender
- Damaging people's property e.g. if someone's school bag has insults about being gay written on it
- Someone being left out of activities or games because they are or thought to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender
- Emails, texts or on-line messages being sent round that 'outs' someone and claims they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

“ BTW, THE PHRASE **THAT'S SO GAY IS HOMOPHOBIC!** ”

People don't always think of gay people when they say things like this, but these types of phrases are dangerous, as they start to become a part of everyday chat. The impact these phrases have on LGBT people, and to other people who hear them, can be quite damaging and can lead to people developing problems with their confidence and self-esteem.

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and violent behavior can be reported to the police and is dealt with as a Hate Crime. People can get into a lot of trouble because of this type of behaviour.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you are or you know someone who is experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying in school, here are a *few* suggestions:

- Don't react with violence, name calling or consider 'how to get your own back'. If you are upset it might seem like a great idea to punch or shout back, but you don't want to get yourself into trouble or end up in a fight where you might get hurt more.
- If you can, tell an adult you trust (teacher or youth worker perhaps).
- Tell a friend you trust. They might not be able to stop it, but they may be able to talk to someone who can for you. Remember you don't have to handle this on your own.

“ IT TAKES A LOT OF EFFORT TO **HATE SOMEONE** WHY CAN'T EVERYONE **RESPECT EACH OTHER AND GET ON...** IT WOULD MAKE LIFE A LOT **NICER AND EASIER** ”

## ADVICE & SUPPORT

**Childline**  
This a free 24 hour phone line for children and young people. Call about anything that is worrying you: no issue is too big or too small.

Or email or text them through their website.

Telephone: 0800 1111  
Web: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**LGBT Youth Scotland**  
You can send an e-mail for confidential advice and support or go to the website for more info.

This service is for LGBT young people, their family and friends, or anyone who wants to find out more information.

Email: [info@lgbtyouth.org.uk](mailto:info@lgbtyouth.org.uk)  
Web: [www.lgbtyouth.org.uk](http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk)

**The Police**  
Remember if you feel you or someone you know is in immediate danger call 999.

## CHANGE THROUGH EDUCATION

71% of young people consulted by the Scottish Youth Parliament agreed that:

"There should be increased LGBT education and information in all schools to reduce stigma and homophobic bullying"  
*Change The Picture, Scottish Youth Parliament*

"We want to challenge the negative attitudes within society that make some people think it's okay to harass or bully LGBT people. Homophobic bullying is completely unacceptable..."  
*Nicola Sturgeon MSP, Deputy First Minister of Scotland*

## YOUR RIGHTS

You have many protections in your life and at school under the Equality Act 2010. Your rights are outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which applies to all young people under 18 years old.

You are also responsible for ensuring you don't abuse other young people's rights. Bullying can take away other young people's rights *some* key rights in the UNCRC include:

- The right to be protected against unfairness of any kind.
- The right to have your voice heard and listened to when decisions that affect you are made.
- The right to freedom of expression, while respecting other young people's own rights.
- Education should encourage you to develop and meet your fullest potential and should teach you to be a respectful and responsible person.

For more info about the UNCRC please visit:  
[www.sccyp.org.uk](http://www.sccyp.org.uk) or freephone SCCYP, 0800 019 1179

## HOW TO PREVENT BULLYING

Challenging homophobia, biphobia and transphobia is something that anyone can do. In fact, the more people that challenge it, the more likely we are to change the world in which we live in. Just little things can make a real difference.

Here are *some* things you could do to challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviours:

- Get active – Ask your teacher/youth worker if your school/youth group is planning on doing anything for anti-bullying week – which usually takes place in Scotland during November – see what you can do to get involved; such as creating anti-bullying posters that celebrate difference.

“ **EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD** ”

*Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first democratically elected President*

## WHAT IS THE LGBT NYC ?

The LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) National Youth Council (NYC) is a group of young people who campaign for the rights of LGBT young people in Scotland.

**Our aims**  
Change – prejudiced views and discrimination, which cause too many LGBT young people harm, stress, worry or fear.

Defend – the rights of all young people affected by prejudice, discrimination, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying.

Enlighten – all young people and enable them to live successful, happy and prosperous lives.

Empower – all young people to work together for a future free from prejudice, discrimination, stereotypes and negative values.

They believe that all young people have the right to live happy and successful lives and that we need to work together to create a better future!

The LGBT NYC created the What's The Difference? campaign to make a difference in Scotland. If you want to find out more about this or anything else in this guide, then get in touch:

Email: [nyc@lgbtyouth.org.uk](mailto:nyc@lgbtyouth.org.uk)

Webpage: [www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/nyc.htm](http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/nyc.htm)

Or to become a LGBT NYC Facebook fan, search: LGBT National Youth Council

“ IF LGBT PEOPLE ARE GIVEN **HUMAN RIGHTS,** THEN NEXT EVERYONE **WILL WANT THEM** ”

## CONTACTS + THANKS

We would like to thank all the young people on the LGBT National Youth Council, their supporters and friends who have helped to develop this resource.

We would also like to thank respectme for all their useful words and guidance.

For more online information about bullying behaviour check out, respectme's website:  
[www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)



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