

Names Session Plan

Learning Intentions:

- To develop an understanding of transphobia and its impact on the LGBT community.
- To understand the impact of language and how this can contribute to other types of abuse.
- To recognise the role of bystanders and ways in which bystanders can intervene.

Key Learning Outcomes:

HWB 1/2 /3/4-02a

I know that we all experience a variety of thoughts and emotions that affect how we feel and behave and I am learning ways of managing them.

HWB 1/2/3/4-03a

I understand that there are people I can talk to and that there are a number of ways in which I can gain access to practical and emotional support to help me and others in a range of circumstances.

HWB 1/2/3/4-04a

I understand that my feelings and reactions can change depending upon what is happening within and around me. This helps me to understand my own behaviour and the way others behave.

HWB 1/2/3/4-05a

I know that friendship, caring, sharing, fairness, equality and love are important in building positive relationships. As I develop and value relationships, I care and show respect for myself and others.

HWB 1/2/3/4-08a

I understand that people can feel alone and can be misunderstood and left out by others. I am learning how to give appropriate support.

HWB 2-44b

I am aware that positive friendships and relationships can promote health and the health and wellbeing of others.

LIT 3-02a

When I engage with others, I can make a relevant contribution, encourage others to contribute and acknowledge that they have the right to hold a different opinion. I can respond in ways appropriate to my role and use contributions to reflect on, clarify or adapt thinking.

LIT 4-02a

When I engage with others I can make a relevant contribution, ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute and encourage them to take account of others' points of view or alternative solutions. I can respond in ways appropriate to my role, exploring and expanding on contributions to reflect on, clarify or adapt thinking.

Success Criteria

- I can identify the impacts of transphobic abuse.
- I understand how language can be used to abuse and harm groups and individuals.
- I know different ways I can safely intervene and support if I see this abuse.

UNCRC Children's Rights

Article 2 states that children have the right to protection against discrimination.

Article 29 states that children have the right to an education which encourages them to respect other people's rights and values.

Article 8 states that children have the right to an identity and for this to be respected.

Article 16 states that children have the right to a private life.

GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators

Safe, Healthy, Respected, Responsible, Included.

RSHP Second and Third & Fourth level:

[Part 3. Being transgender \(Activity plan\) \(rshp.scot\)](#)

<https://rshp.scot/third-fourth-level/#humansexuality>

Preparation:

- Prepare 5 min icebreaker activity (you can develop your own, or see session plan below for an example)
- PowerPoint slides or handout sheet(s) of scenario / train of thought / options (ppt download available)
- Slides or flipchart with ADU statement (ppt download available)
- Agree and Disagree signs (download available)
- Current relevant statistics from [https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/files/documents/Life in Scotland for LGBT Young People - Education Report NEW.pdf](https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/files/documents/Life_in_Scotland_for_LGBT_Young_People_-_Education_Report_NEW.pdf)

Resources:

- Projector & PowerPoint (if being used)
- Flipchart / whiteboard
- Marker pens
- Your Group Agreement (pin/tack this up in the room)
- Gender Box flipcharts (pin/tack these up in the room)
- Definitions of transgender, sex, gender, gender expression and gender identity (on slide)

Other Useful resources:

[A summary of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood \(RSHP\) resources | Resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[LGBT Inclusive Education | Resources | National Improvement Hub](#)

[Resources — Time for Inclusive Education \(TIE\)](#)

[Shh! Silence Helps Homophobia - LGBT Youth Scotland - YouTube](#)

https://wakelet.com/wake/F0_9bxvj4-hxmOJ1qKB_O



Introduction (2 minutes)

Welcome the group and inform them that **this session will look at transphobia what it can 'look like' and the impact it can have on people who are trans. Inform them that they will also be considering the roles gender, gender expectations and gender stereotypes play in how they can influence in school settings.**

Refer to the Learning Intentions and Success Criteria on the slide and also the Children's Rights articles this session will cover.

Refer to group agreement and ask if pupils would like to add / change anything.

Remind the group that the issues raised in the lesson can be difficult and there might be people in the class with personal experiences. The group agreement is there so that everyone feels safe, included and supported.

If anyone needs support during the lesson they can ask a mentor or speak to the teacher who is nearby.

At the end of the lesson, mentors will put up a list of places in and out of school that can offer support if anyone needs it. They can also get these at any time from mentors or staff.

Icebreaker Activity (5 minutes)

Example Icebreaker: Name Game

Invite the group to sit in a circle.

Explain that you will be playing a game called the name game. Facilitators can choose one of the following, or more than one, time permitting:

- **My Name:** People introduce themselves and explain what their name means and why they have it, if they know.
- **Adjectives:** People introduce themselves using their full name and then have to say something they like which starts with the same initials (for example, “My name is John Smith and I like jam sandwiches.” Or “My name is Elizabeth Windsor and I like elegant whales.”)
- **Memory Tester:** The first person says their name; the 2nd person says first person’s name, then their own name; 3rd person says 1st person's name, 2nd person's name then their own name. Go around until last person has said everyone's names.

To close, share with the group that this session will be focusing on use of pronouns and identity and that the purpose of the energiser is to show how important and individual your own name, and identity is.

Scenario (5 minutes)

Remind the class that for this session they will be bystanders to an incident involving a friend, classmate or someone they know.

Show slide/ flipchart or share copy of scenario and ask for a volunteer to read the scenario (If, after asking twice, no one volunteers then read it yourself)

Your friend was born male and now identifies as female. You were at primary school with her and remember when she identified as a boy. Since she began to identify as female, some of your classmates refuse to call her 'she' and some of her friends have stopped including her when going out.

Ask the group:

1. Is this realistic; is it the kind of thing that might happen?
2. Put your hand up if you feel there is something wrong with what is happening in this scenario...

If most of the group raise their hand, before they are lowered ask them to look around the room and see how their friends/classmates have responded. If most don't put their hand up at this point – return to this question after the discussion part of the session.

3. **We've agreed that most of us think there is something wrong with this, so what are the red flags? What are the key words or phrases in this which make you feel uncomfortable?** Ask pupils to discuss this for 30 seconds with the person beside them, then ask class to call them out – note the red flags down on flipchart/whiteboard as they are called out.

Train of Thought (5 minutes)

Ask the group:

As a bystander when you see this, what questions would you have? What would you be thinking?

This can be briefly discussed in pairs or groups and then shared

Ask for a volunteer to read the following train of thought (if after asking twice no one volunteers then read it yourself)

I wish my classmates would respect that my friend is now female, but I don't want them to fall out with me if I say anything. Maybe they don't think it's a big deal, but I feel bad watching this. At least I'm not joining in, but how will she know that I don't agree with what's happening if I don't speak up? Why don't some of her friends include her any more, or better still, stand up for her? I know how hurt I would feel if that was me. No one else is doing anything. What should I do?

Ask the group:

- 1. Is there anything within that thought process which particularly stands out to you?**
- 2. What reasons might someone give for not getting involved in this situation?**

Suggestions may include: fear, think it's nothing to do with me, they can take care of themselves, it happens a lot so she must be used to it, she should expect that some people won't agree with this, don't want to get into an argument, don't want people to think they are transgender or any other LGBT identity etc...

Agree Disagree Unsure (10 minutes)

AGREE/DISAGREE/UNSURE

Place your agree and disagree signs at opposite sides of the room.

Tell the group you are going to show them a statement (on ppt/flipchart) and they should decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement, moving to the relevant side of the room. If they are unsure, they can stand in the middle.

NOTE: When facilitating this activity if you find that one of the options of agree/unsure/disagree has no one choose it, one of your team should play 'devil's advocate' and stand in that area and give reasons. This ensures all possible viewpoints are covered.

Statement 1

Misusing preferred pronouns is disrespectful

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3 people in each group:
Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?

While it might not always be intentional to misuse pronouns the impact it can have on an individual could be significant. It is denying their identity, is a form of verbal and emotional abuse and contributes to the prejudice and exclusion members of the trans community can experience.

Statement 2

Being transgender isn't well understood so trans people have a responsibility to help others understand it better

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3 people in each group:
Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?

Everyone has the right to attend school in safety. If transgender identities are not well understood in the school, this is something for teachers and senior leaders to challenge and ensure LGBT voices and identities are included, celebrated and understood by all.

It is not the responsibility of those with lived experience to educate others but when they do, it is everyone's responsibility to listen and try to understand. We should all try to ensure empathy and compassion so that those in the trans community can share their experience if they wish.

Ask the group:

What do you understand by the term transgender? The term transgender can be used to describe anyone whose gender identity differs in some way from their sex assigned at birth. You can show slides with definitions if appropriate.

Sex definition: biologically defined as male or female as determined by their anatomy

Gender definition: a social construction relating to behaviours and attributes based on labels of masculinity and femininity

Gender Identity: an individual's internal self-perception of their own gender.

Gender Expression: an individual's external gender-related physical appearance and behaviour.

Discussion (10 minutes)

Ask group to sit down and again show the scenario.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Ask the group:

1. How might it hurt someone to not use their preferred pronoun?

Suggestions might include:

It can be hurtful and harmful whether it is intentional or not but misuse of pronouns or 'deadnaming' is a common form of abuse directed at members of the trans community. (Deadnaming is using the individuals name given to them at birth and not the name they have now chosen).

Other people who are in the area may be questioning their gender identity or have a family member or friend who is transgender - it could make them feel angry, ashamed or unable to talk about them.

2. How do you think your friend might be feeling in this situation?

Responses may include: embarrassed, upset, isolated, alone, scared etc.

Angry – no one like to feel disrespected

Not bothered – it's not something your friend is affected by

Isolated, alone – not able to talk to anyone, see that people don't care about them.

Embarrassed – they don't like having attention drawn to them

Upset – this could have really upset them but they may not show it

Scared – this could be an aggressive situation in which your friend could be feeling attacked

Shame – being ridiculed for who they are

All of this can have an impact on an individual's mental health, for example, anxiety and depression. Show slide with stats below.

- 63% of transgender young people experienced suicidal thoughts or behaviours
- 59% of transgender young people had self-harmed
- 83% of transgender young people who had experienced mental health problems, had been bullied at school.

3. In the train of thought it asks 'Why don't her friends include her or stand up for her?' Why might this be?

There is a common misconception that those who are friends with transgender people are also transgender or are lesbian, gay or bisexual. This can lead to friends of LGBT people not wanting to be seen with them after they come out in case they get bullied, harassed, discriminated against or lose popularity.

Ask: How do you think this might make her feel?

Answers similar to above – unsupported, ashamed, embarrassed, isolated, afraid, upset etc.

4. Remind pupils about the gender box exercise with regard to gender expectations and the negative consequences of stepping outside of those expectations. What gender expectations are in play in this scenario?

Suggestions might include: what people wear, how they act, how they sound, how people respond to someone who does not conform to gender expectations, expectations of how people should treat LGBT individuals.

5. Why do you think some of your classmates are behaving this way towards your friend in the scenario?

Suggestions might include: trying to be funny, they don't understand how hurtful that is, they might be uncomfortable around members of the trans and are lashing out.

7. Why might this type of behaviour make it difficult for a member of the trans community to be open about their gender identity?

Suggestions might include: because it can make them think that it's bad or wrong to be transgender, they might think they'll be bullied etc.

Explain to the class that misgendering someone is a form of abuse.

Being called names, or hearing someone who is transgender being called names and no one intervening can prevent other people from being able to be themselves, and ultimately be happy in their lives.

8. Why might other bystanders (friends) be slow to say or do something?

Suggestions may include: fear - of being different, of being called a name themselves or of attention turning on them, they think it's just 'banter', they don't see a problem etc.

9. What is transphobia?

Transphobic bullying is behaviour or language that makes a child or young person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their perceived or actual gender identity. This can include deliberately calling trans young people the wrong pronoun, calling them names or making fun of their gender identity or expression. Show slide with definition.

Not all transphobic bullying is directed at trans young people. For example comparing people to transgender people in a derogatory manner would be an example of transphobic bullying. Transgender people can also experience homophobia when in same-sex relationships or for not conforming to gender norms.

10. To what extent do you think transphobia is a problem in schools?

Use recent statistics from LGBT Youth and/or Stonewall to support the fact transphobia remains a problem for young people in Scotland. Show slide with stats.

LGBT Youth Scotland's research shows 77% of transgender young people experienced bullying in schools. 88% of them thought it had a negative impact on their education. 37% of transgender young people had left education as a result of homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.

11. Is transphobia a crime?

When someone is breaking the law i.e. hitting someone/ being violent or making someone constantly scared, this can be reported to the police as a crime and someone could get charged with assault or harassment. If the victim or anyone else thinks it was carried out because of hostility or prejudice against your sexual orientation or transgender identity, it can become a hate crime.

Anyone can be the victim of a homophobic, biphobic or transphobic hate crime. You can be the victim if someone believes you're an LGBT person even though you're not. You can also be the victim of an attack because of your association with members of the LGBT communities.

Only if at the beginning most of the class didn't see any problem with the scenario, this would be a good point to revisit it. Again, show the scenario and ask the class, 'Given what we've now discussed, can you raise your hand if you think there's something wrong with what is going on here.'

Responsibility

Refer to scenario, and **ask the group**:

1. Do we have a responsibility to do something here?

2. Who do we have a responsibility to?

You may need to prompt group

3. Do we have a responsibility to our transgender classmate? Why?

Misusing pronouns or misgendering can be hurtful. Your classmate might be hurt or upset.

4. Do we have a responsibility to our classmates and friends? Why?

They might not know the significance and impact of their behaviour.

5. Do we have a responsibility to others around us who might have heard?

Others around might be transgender or questioning their gender identity, or may have friends or family who are transgender. This scenario could be very offensive to them.

6. Do we have a responsibility to ourselves?

We have a responsibility to keep ourselves safe, and to be able to say if we don't agree with something.

Explain to the group we are now going to explore some of the things we could do in this situation.

Options (10 minutes)

If you have time you might ask the group to consider the pro's and cons of these options in small groups first, before you discuss as a larger group. Or alternatively go through together as a whole group.

Option 1: Do nothing. It's none of your business.

Ask the group:

1. Is this an option that some might consider using?

We have already identified some of the reasons people might give for not getting involved.

2. What might happen if you do nothing?

Responses may include: It could get worse, people might feel unable to be open about their gender identity, people can be offended, it can impact on your friend's mental health.

3. What does doing nothing say to your friend?

That you don't think there's anything wrong with what is happening.

4. What does doing nothing say to your classmates?

That this is ok and that you don't think there's a problem with what they are saying and doing.

Option 2: Whenever it happens, quickly change the subject.

Ask the group:

1. How could you change the subject in this situation?

Come up with a couple of your ideas ahead of the session in case you need to prompt the group.

2. What might this say to your friend?

They might recognise that you don't agree with the misuse of pronouns, or they might just think you didn't hear or weren't interested in what was being said.

3. How likely would this be to stop the further misuse of pronouns?

Not really. You haven't challenged the use of language.

Option 3: Ask your friend if she is okay and let her know you didn't like what happened.

Ask the group:

1. How might your friend feel if you did this?

Suggestions might include: supported, pleased you recognised there was something wrong, less isolated etc.

NOTE: Acknowledge that they may not want to talk about it. This might be because they don't feel ready or perhaps it didn't affect them.

2. If you only speak to your friend, what haven't you addressed?

The verbal abuse and the exclusion have not been addressed.

3. Do you think you might still need to speak to her other friends who are leaving her out? Why?

Not addressing it with the them means they are likely to keep excluding her.

Option 4: Let your classmates and her friends know you're not happy with what they are doing and that being abusive is not okay.

Ask the group:

1. How easy would it be to directly confront the behaviour in this way?

Why?

This might be easier for more confident people in the group, but can be daunting for others.

2. What could you do to make this option safer and easier to do?

Suggestions may include: making sure you say it at the right time and in the right way – not judging, but being clear about what is wrong, perhaps taking a friend with you or asking an adult to address it with your classmate rather than doing it on your own.

Option 5: Start a discussion with others and see what their views are.

Ask the group:

1. Why might this be a good option?

Remind the group that as most/all have already agreed that they see something wrong in this situation (when they raised their hands earlier), chances are others would too.

2. If more people start to challenge abuse when they hear it, what might happen?

Suggestions may include: people would stop doing it so much, people who are transgender wouldn't feel there was something wrong with that, people could be themselves, school would be happier etc.

3. What reasons might people give for not choosing this option?

Getting a wider group of people involved might cause more upset for your friend. It might make the classmate and friends react more defensively or aggressively if being challenged by a group.

Option 6: Talk about this with a teacher/adult you trust or an MVP mentor, and ask if they can start a class/group discussion on this, and/or invite the local LGBT group in.

Ask the group:

1. What might make this a good option?

Suggestions may include: you don't need to get directly involved or name the people involved but can still address the issue in a wider group, pupils might be more likely to listen to listen to a teacher/adult or MVP mentor, it gives an opportunity to discuss the potential harm as a group etc...

2. What reasons might people give for not choosing this option?

Suggestions might include: It might be obvious who or what it's about - even if you don't name names (let pupils know that they can talk this through with an adult) they might feel they don't want to be targeted (remind pupils that the teacher /mentor won't need to identify them if they choose to have a wider class discussion about this).

Option 7: Report it to Fearless.org as a transphobic hate crime

NOTE: Fearless is a site where young people can access non-judgemental information about crime. What makes this site unique is that it also provides young people with a safe place to give information about crime - 100% anonymously. Always.

They won't ask for your name, address, phone number etc. They can't trace your computer or IP address. It's as easy as writing a text message – it only takes a couple of minutes.

<http://www.fearless.org>

Ask the group:

1. When might someone choose to use this option?

Suggestions may include: when the abuse isn't stopping; when you've tried other options but it continues; when things appear to be escalating etc.

2. What could happen if you choose this option?

Ultimately it will be investigated as a criminal offence. Your classmate could get into trouble.

Your friend will recognise that is an offence for people to deliberately/continually misuse her pronouns and may feel more supported; or she may feel the criminal investigation draws further unwanted attention to her situation.

Option 8: Personal Option

Ask the group:

1. Is there anything else you could do?

Remember to explore the possible consequences for any additional options.

Thank the group for their answers and ideas.

Accessing Support (1 minutes)

The last slide highlights places and organisations where learners can access support if they have been impacted by the lesson in any way or are worried about a friend.

Ensure that in-school supports are discussed, but make the mentees aware of where they can get support outside of school, so that they have a range of options.

You can add local supports to the slide alongside the national ones already included that you feel are relevant to your community/area. You can also discuss this with your MVP Lead in school and also partners.

Conclusion (1 minutes)

Ask the group to think back to the name game activity they did at the start of the session and remind them about how important our own individual identity is. Someone using an insulting term to attack a part of your identity you can't control can be very hurtful. Let the group know that as leaders, they have the opportunity to make sure their school and community are supportive and inclusive, and that this begins with the use of language.

Ask the group:

What have you learnt from today's session?

You might want to note responses on flipchart

Reinforce key messages from discussion to include:

- ✓ Transgender young people can face discrimination and abuse in many different ways including misuse of pronouns, deadnaming and being excluded.
- ✓ Transgender young people face a challenging time in school. This can be made easier with supportive friends, teachers and peers.
- ✓ Gender identity is formed at an early age and is core to who you are as an individual.
- ✓ No one has the right to try to explain, question or deny your gender identity.
- ✓ This type of behaviour could make it difficult for a transgender person to be themselves and impact on their health and wellbeing.
- ✓ There are a number of options we can choose from to challenge behaviour we don't agree with.
- ✓ We have a responsibility to help our friends and keep ourselves safe.

Accessing Support

Leave this slide up as the lesson finishes and the Mentees leave.