

Safe Schools

LGBTQ

THINK TANK

SUMMARY REPORT



ABOUT THE CANADIAN SAFE SCHOOL NETWORK

The Canadian Safe School Network (CSSN) is a national, not-for-profit, registered charitable organization with a mandate to reduce youth violence and make our schools and communities safer. CSSN was born of the Government of Ontario's Safe School Task Force and was launched in 1997 by representatives from police, education and business communities.

Every one of us recognizes how important it is for our children to have safe and secure school environments, but there are factors beyond the control of either parents or educators because they are societal in nature. We believe that fostering a sense of shared responsibility about the issues relating to youth safety in our communities is fundamental for progress to be made.

Bullying, adolescent mental health issues, LGBTQ inclusion & acceptance, youth violence and crime in schools and communities are ongoing concerns across Canada. The number of young people charged with assault and weapons offences has more than doubled in the past decade. Despite ongoing efforts of organizations like CSSN, many marginalized youth still report feeling unsafe at school. The rise of Social Media has turned bullying, harassment & intimidation into an inescapable, 24/7 problem for many Canadian children.

For many educators, parents & community organizations, school safety issues are evolving at a rate with which they simply cannot keep up. That's where CSSN comes in. We are here to help teachers, schools, school boards & the community at large deal with the onslaught of youth safety & inclusion issues that we now see daily across the country.

The Canadian
Safe School
NETWORK



PROJECT SUMMARY

On Monday May 25th the Canadian Safe School Network hosted the LGBTQ Student Think Tank in 4 cities across Canada! Sponsored by TD Bank, the day was an interactive event focused on LGBTQ issues in high schools. The Think Tank addressed questions such as overcoming stigma, positive mental health, bullying, sources of support and much more. The event brought together LGBTQ high school students from rural and urban communities surrounding Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg and the Annapolis Valley, NS.

Each Think Tank gave students the opportunity to ask questions and share their ideas with groups participating in other cities using Twitter. This interactive component resulted in a fantastic cross-nation discussion about the most relevant issues facing LGBTQ youth. CSSN is currently in the process of collecting and analyzing the information from each event so that we can share it with our supporters and educators!



PROJECT GOALS

1. Using a bottom-up approach to help build more accepting schools.

We're bringing together LGBTQ youth across the country to gather information on the challenges of being gay in school and to help find ways to overcome them.

2. To provide the information to those who have the power to help.

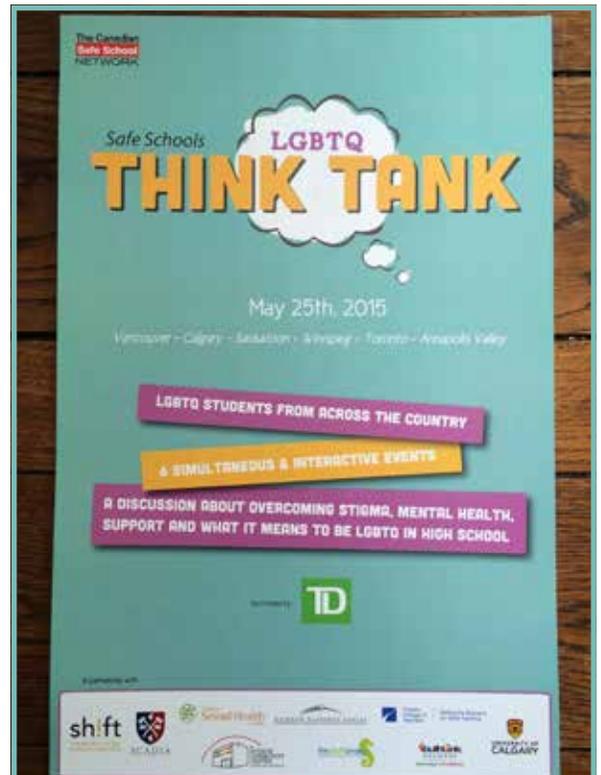
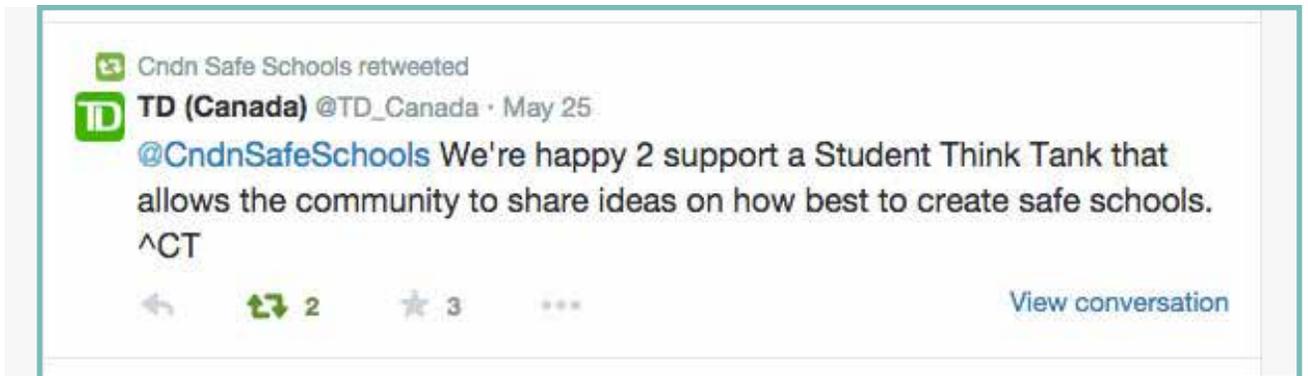
This interprovincial initiative will examine LGBTQ struggles and offer the valuable insight to educators, parents, and government so that we can make a real difference.



PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

The success of the event is due in large part to the financial support of TD bank, which made it possible to seamlessly execute all four events nation wide, in addition to the upcoming remaining two Think Tank events.

To make it all happen we established connections in every city that helped us organize all aspects of each event. Partners helped provide space, coordinators, facilitators, volunteers, and access to students. These connections in combination with our own established supporters and systems of communication led to the success of the event.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Canadian Safe School Network would like to thank the following individuals who provided insight and expertise that greatly assisted in the development and execution of the first ever Safe Schools LGBTQ Student Think Tank event.

Tonya Callaghan, PhD, Assistant Professor, Werklund School of Education
Brian Hansen, Research Associate, Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence
Lianne Lee, Facilitator, Werklund Youth Leadership Centre (YLC)
Nick Moore, Manager of Programs and Education, YouthLink Calgary
Lydia Hedrich, Assistant Superintendent – Curriculum, Seven Oaks School Division
Stacey Abramson, Teacher, Secen Oaks School Division
Lindsay Brown, Teacher, Seven Oaks School Division
Jared Star, Youth Programs Coordinator, Towel Talk Counselor, Rainbow Resource Centre
Jean Bacon, Consultant, Positive Behavioural Interventions
Amanda Guthrie, Education and Youth Coordinator, Avenue Community Centre
Rachel Loewen Walker, Executive Director, Avenue Community Centre
Carson Allard, Program Officer, Ontario College of Teachers
Kathy Anstett, External Relations Officer, Ontario College of Teachers
Stu Auty, President, The Canadian Safe School Network
Pauline Auty, Vice President, The Canadian Safe School Network
William Byrd, Safe Schools Administrator, Toronto District School Board
Joe Jamieson, Deputy Registrar, Ontario College of Teachers
Gabriel Johnston, Ontario College of Teachers
Leata Lekushoff, Ontario College of Teachers
Kevin Carver, Vice Principal, Horton High School
Sheena Jamieson, Support Services Coordinator, The Youth Project
Rena Kulczycki, Senior Program Facilitator, HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development
Katie McCabe, Education and Development Coordinator, The Canadian Safe School Network
Breagh Potter, Acadia University
Glynis Ross, Professor, Acadia University
Hugh Sampson, Acadia University
Nadine Boulay, Simon Fraser University
Renee Goncalves, Communications & Events Coordinator, The Canadian Safe School Network
Brian Burke, President of Hockey Operations, The Calgary Flames

Thank you to all of the volunteers who are on-site at Safe Schools LGBTQ Think Tanks across the country and to the following organizations who helped make the event possible!





EVENT SUMMARY

STUDENTS:

Each event was 3 hours long and had between 15 and 18 students in attendance. We were pleased to have a variety of youth representing nearly all communities in the LGBTQ spectrum at each Think Tank in addition to students who identified as LGBTQ



allies. The students involved came from many different communities both rural and urban. The process for student attendance required that students have a teacher or adult mentor complete a reference form, as well as have a parent sign a permission form. Both of these forms were then sent to CSSN by email with the students express interest in participating. All students who wished to attend were accepted. It should be noted that because of the process in which students were accepted, all youth participating were openly out as members of the LGBTQ community. It is to be assumed that by signing a permission form the parents of these students were aware of their

identification as LGBTQ or with their support of the LGBTQ community. Many of the students in attendance were members of Gay Straight Alliances, Queer Straight Alliances, or a similar extra-curricular group at their respective high schools.

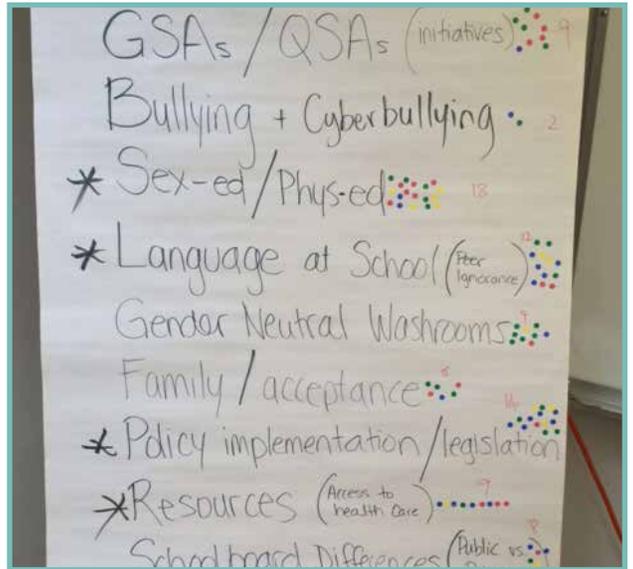
EVENT ACTIVITIES:

Prior to the event all volunteers and event coordinators were given detailed manuals the outlined all the activities for the day. Each event followed the same manuals and took part in the same activities and general discussions themes. The event started with introductions, ice breakers and identifying everyone's preferred pronouns. Each event also discussed the best practices for having a group discussion. Many groups mentioned respect, attentive listening, acceptance of differences and being open-minded as important elements for the success of the days activities.

Following these opening remarks and activities the day began by an initial group



discussion. The goal of the group discussion was to identify 'hot topics'. The facilitator at each event used pre-written questions in addition to their own discussion practices to bring up some of the most relevant issues that LGBTQ youth face in school. The main goal of this first group discussion was to have students open up and feel comfortable with the group. All ideas from this discussion were written on chart paper.



The second major activity was the Dot Democracy. All students were given 5 sticker dots and asked to consider the discussion they had just had as a group. They were asked what topics they found most interesting and what topics most applied to them. They then placed a sticker on 5 different topics listed on the chart paper that they would like to discuss in depth.

Following Dot Democracy students were separated into groups. Either 3 or 4 groups were created depending on the number of students in attendance. Each break out group was assigned one of the most popular 'hot topics' generated during Dot Democracy. These smaller student groups then had a discussion on that topic, and recorded any and all ideas on chart paper. After 5 minutes, students rotated between each topic.

Finally all students gathered again for a last large discussion led by the facilitator. They examined the 'hot-topics' and what was discussed in the break out group work. They concluded this conversation by highlighting what some of the next steps and/or solutions could be for these issues.



SUMMARY OF GATHERED INFORMATION

ANNAPOLIS VALLEY, NS

Topics generated from large group discussion

(The numbers following represent the outcomes of the Dot Democracy Activity)

- Disrespecting identities (pronouns)-13 *people interested*
- Homophobia and transphobia (fear for personal safety)-14 *people interested*
- Visibility-13 *people interested*
- Intersections of religion/faith and gender/sexual identity-8 *people interested*
- Coming out-9 *people interested*
- Social awkwardness-8 *people interested*
- Education for educators/health curriculum (sexual health to include gender issues)/ information and resources *three separate topics the group joined together-18 *people interested*

'Hot topics' generated from Dot Democracy (based on the above)

(The information under each of the following subheading was generated from the small breakout group work. The information is copied directly from chart paper written on by participating students. CSSN did not alter this information.)

Homophobia and Transphobia (Personal Safety)

- Leads to suicide
- Trying to stay in safe environment
- School books with info-films (not pornographic) aka nsfw
- Blood donors
- Fear of being judged-being told you don't belong
- Avoiding situations/spaces-limits peoples involvement
- Teachers/staff openly challenging transphobia, homophobia etc-raising awareness, keeping people to become open minded
- Teach word meanings!
- Speaking up-severe physical violence-if people know they are supposed to speak up why don't they?
- Stress
- Education
- Strike out homophobia
- Change rooms and washrooms need to be publicly available
- Gender neutral washrooms
- Intolerance to slurs
- Knowing what 'faggot' and 'queer' actually mean
- Avoiding the cafeteria = use of hurtful language = lots of people
- "You made that choice" – being LGBTQ is not a choice
- Stop people who use slurs
- Skipping school

Visibility

- Ellen page
- Ellen Degenerous
- Bruce Jenner
- Miley Cyrus
- Ruby Rose
- Elton John
- Lead singers in the bands Queen and Judice Priest
- Famous people (role model?)
- Media representation
- LGBTQ+ inclusive films and literature
- Netflix-subcategory-perpetuates the idea that straight is a default
- Exposure
- Social media coverage
- Proper bible translations
- "The 100"
- Sense 8-show coming out soon about identities (sci fi)
- Facebook (AWEC GSA)-high school in AV has a Facebook page
- Encourage faculty to be out (to be a role model)
- More visibility=less "curiosity" about the rare "species"
- Lack of visibility encourages stereotyping!
- Show young kids that homosexuality exists (for example, a math question with Adam and Steve)
- Pride parades
- Diversity day
- GSA Conferences
- Rainbow Prom

Disrespecting identities (pronouns)

- Learn the terms of the pronouns
- Schools respecting pronoun choice at 12
- Teach what pronouns are and uses
- People make mistakes
- Teach pronouns
- Use external organizations – pronouns
- Don't out people!
- Don't assume
- Avoid heteronormativity/cissexism
- Use the correct name
- Presentations
- RCH advisors
- Support people
- Use neutral pronouns until you know
- Ask and use preferred name/pronouns
- Attendance list preferred name should be more obvious
- Don't laugh at other's genders
- Ask and don't assume at beginning of school year
- Teachers set the example
- Educate

Health education, information and resources

- Sex ed about homo/hetero sex and should be explained
- Youth on teachers education
- Discipline-teachers should actually do something about issues, not just ignore it
- Teaching should be non-biased
- Resources from teachers should be handed out
- Have sex ed class (AWEC)
- Sex? How it works? STD? Aids? Condoms for girls?
- Give health teaching assignments to teachers that are comfortable talking about LGBTQ to avoid making the topic even more forbidden.
- Wiki pages-resources for teachers-info and slides
- Teach sex ed teachers what is needed to know
- Trans specific health care information
- Taking the time to teach and learn about GSA and LGBTQ2 in schools and communities
- Introduce homosexual couples to young kids (math questions)
- Access to resources for safe sex that doesn't involve a penial condom
- Talk about it!
- Youth on youth education-examples PLAYAS and RFD at Horton
- Education for teachers
- Remind teachers that they might be wrong about LGBTQ+ issues and to listen to students

The Annapolis Valley Think Tank created a list of rules to ensure a safe space at the event:

AV discussion "rules"-what helps you feel safer? Sharing your ideas

- Expect awkwardness
- Get comfortable
- Be welcoming
- Eye contact
- Be open minded
- Feedback-give/receive
- Actual listening
- No pressure
- Demonstrate friendliness
- Be approachable
- Use proper pronouns
- No judgement/respect
- We're in this together!

VANCOUVER, BC

Topics generated from large group discussion

(The numbers following represent the outcomes of the Dot Democracy Activity)

- GSAs/QSAs (initiatives) - 9
- Bullying and cyberbullying - 2
- Sex ed/phys ed - 18
- Language at school (peer ignorance) - 12
- Gender neutral washrooms - 9
- Family/acceptance - 6
- Policy implementation/legislation - 14
- Resources/access to health care - 9
- School board differences (public vs religious boards) - 8

'Hot topics' generated from Dot Democracy (based on the above)

(The information under each of the following subheading was generated from the small breakout group work. The information is copied directly from chart paper written on by participating students. CSSN did not alter this information.)

Sex Ed./Phys Ed.

- LGBTQ & Sex ed from a younger age
- Heterocentric & gender binary information
- Sexual and disease prevention for Qmunity-from LGBTQ & educated resources
- Same education for everyone-equal
- Teachers should be educated on LGBTQ and sex ed
- Bring in someone who is experienced in giving LGBTQ+ sex ed relatable presentations
- Stall change rooms
- Emotional health connects to sex
- Sex can be an addiction
- Actual sex educators
- School assumption
- Include sexual orientation
- Include gender identity
- Protection always available to everyone everywhere

Resources

- Links on school websites
- Books in library
- Info on posters
- Info hallway
- Hot lines
- Brochures/pamphlets
- Planning
- Not just LGBTQ resources-suicide hotlines too
- Queer history (successful events, feel proud)
- Educate on new medical advancements
- Article in newsletter
- Videos in planning class/other classes
- Presentations/workshops

- Queer youth workers (make it known)
- Educate staff
- Resources more available (presentations school wide-no money barriers)
- Free gender therapists (schools, Vancouver coastal health)
- Video representation
- Friends/family education
- Allies
- Films, links, online communities
- GSA
- All counsellors should be educated on LGBTQ+ issues
- Parent information sessions available through the school/on LGBTQ+ issues
- Information in washrooms about gender
- Educate in Socials and other classes about LGBTQ history, rallies, and current events

Language

- Peer pressure
- Education
- Context
- Media influence
- Ex. "that's so gay!"
- Meaning of the words said
- Reclaiming words
- Treated the same as using a curse word
- Punishments
- "How would you feel if I said that's so (person's name)?"
- Teacher education on proper terminology
- Parent education on proper terminology
- Proper Pronouns
- Teaching younger students the meaning of slurs-ignorance
- They/Them being recognized pronouns in English class curriculum-should not be deducted marks
- Pop culture impacts language
- Acceptable questions vs. unacceptable questions

Policy Implementation

- Acceptance over tolerance-change curriculum-queer history
- Teacher ignorance
- LGBTQ presentation to (elementary schools)
- Gender neutral washrooms
- Actively following through-staff training
- Student representation
- Uniform (mandatory skirt/pants) allow for gender neutral uniform
- Teachers must use chosen pronouns
- Fight for equality in a respectable way-democracy
- Approach faculty/admin/school board-use petitions, voting, and your voice to reason for policies
- Education for both students and staff
- Mandatory workshops for teachers on pronouns, washrooms, etc.
- Be able to record homophobic teachers or students and bring to Principal-believe what students say!
- Punishments

CALGARY, AB

'Hot topics' generated from Dot Democracy (based on the above)

(The information under each of the following subheading was generated from the small breakout group work. The information is copied directly from chart paper written on by participating students. CSSN did not alter this information.)

How do we create a culture of respect in schools?

- Education for staff + staff as leaders
- Education, awareness > GSAs
- Advocating
- Creating a safe place
- Understanding Respect
- Ask about pronouns (Chosen Name)
- Freedom to make mistakes but having the responsibility to correct yourself
- Meeting people where they're at.
- Accepting religious values
- Engaging School Staff
- School Staff intervening on students behalf
- More inclusive curriculum
- Identity awareness day (like pink day)
- Queer Prom
- Prom Royalty
- Allowing Curiosity
- Intervention/standing up.
- Communication + Understanding
- Celebrate all ways in which people are individuals. #DifferentTogether - "Just talking to people"
- Diversity Display Case
- Protecting others information – Not outing.
- Remembering names
- Staying Respectful – polite/straight forward
- Respect is listening & understanding to opposing / different points of view

How do/can we improve mental health for this community?

- Individual – Be a friend, - Kindness – Include people who you have noticed tend to be more isolated – create welcoming friend groups
- Education
- Inclusive literature – LGBTQ – Mental Health
- Accesible Resources
- Teachers are educated
- Safe Space Schools
- Increase Education regarding Mental Health
- Educate teachers
- Educate parents / population at large
- Include intersecting issues/identities
- Use media (film, tv) to normalize diverse identities/experiences

- Elimination of Stigma – more education for younger aged groups
- Normalization of diverse identities
- Home room time for education and awareness raising
- service provision
- Creating/labelling services as LGBTQ+ positive/inclusive (specific and generalized)
- Supports around dealing with mental health
- Safe Spaces in schools
- Easy access to services/make them visible/obvious

How can we create more representation in our schools?

- - Comprehensive Sex Ed: heteronormativity, sexuality not sex, all bodies & all relationships, Asexuality does not equal abstinence
- - Break Stigma!
- - Awareness: creating supportive environment > disabilities, mental illness, socioeconomic status, religion.
- - Non-gendered bathrooms, change rooms, gym classes and events
- - Appropriate PDAs for all
- - Sex positive Language
- - Ally teachers
- - Preparing & Supporting teachers
- - Ask for preferred pronouns and name
- - LGBTQ representation and events
- - Curriculum is inclusive
- - LGBTQ Books in libraries and classrooms
- - Safe Spaces: GSA's, classrooms moderated
- - Positive role models
- - Teaching LGBTQ language
- - Engaging community partners (policies, companies, etc)
- - Normalizing
- - Don't find yourself superior
- - Teaching LGBTQ language



STUDENT MANUALS: A SELECTION OF QUOTES

The following is a selection of quotes from the student manuals distributed at each event.

(CSSN did not alter this information.)

Annapolis Valley

1. Education-teachers and younger students lack knowledge-need to be included in health curriculum-"We need to inform our teachers."
2. Education-lack of education causes confusion and ignorance
3. Education-lack of proper resources and presence of "false" or incorrect information available in "real life" and on the internet.
4. Disrespect of pronouns
5. Acceptance- overall acceptance of LGBTQ individuals but there are conflicts with religion and "trans people are not as accepted". Can lead to discrimination. Some solutions might be gender neutral washrooms, safe place stickers, GSA.
6. Homophobia and Transphobia-"Never been a real issue at my school..." A few select people cause problems occasionally but staff are helpful and supportive of all things LGBTQ.
7. Education-teachers are "rarely adequately educated on LGBTQ issues". Leads to "misinformation and a perpetuation of heteronormativity and cisnormativity". Very difficult to find reliable resources outside of school. Educators also "not willing to accept corrections of their behaviour/information". Some positive solutions are the presence of a GSA and a Respect for Diversity day. However, this directly educates students and not teachers. The teachers need education as well.
8. Visibility-being from a small town/small school community does not lend well to visibility within the immediate population. Small change that this will change drastically or quickly. Reliance on media to create and perpetuate that visibility to smaller communities where it isn't represented.
9. Homophobia/Transphobia-homophobic slurs/phrases are common in school. Very uncomfortable using gendered washrooms. People need more education about "trans people and all they want is to be happy and comfortable in their own body". The creation of a gender neutral washroom is helpful. GSA providing presentations to help improve understanding of trans people.
10. Education-lack of support from educators. Topic avoided or addressed very briefly. Heteronormativity is "rampant". Unreliable resources/access to resources. Curriculum should be altered to include LGBTQ issues ("directly and correctly").
11. Education-schools/educators struggle with LGBTQ health education. However, some schools do a great job. Lack of proper health education around these areas can lead to "unsafe sex, STI risks, incorrect information on hormones/surgery, unsafe use of chest binders". Solutions-Youth peer sex education day, Respect for Diversity Day
12. Education-lack of understanding leads to disrespect-students need to be punished for using derogatory language 100% of the time. Should not be treated as a "forbidden" topic-leads to ignorance and lack of understanding.
13. Education-school boards need to separate from religious groups/beliefs and

pressures around LGBTQ issues. Understand that LGBTQ education “will benefit students”.

14. Education-there needs to be a way to inform/educate students who are fearful of their parents/family members about coming out-talking about these issues.
15. Education-lack of education for teachers to teach students. Community is not inclusive of LGBTQ people. Lack of resources/access to correct resources.
16. TEACHER RESPONSE: Students take on beliefs of parents/caregivers-find it difficult to view parents as “not knowing everything”. Small town youth TERRIFIED to come out because everyone in the community finds out. “The visibility/discussion of LGBTQ youth HAS to happen at the school level.” Solutions-open minded teachers, professional development for educators, kids asking tough questions of parents/churches/teachers etc., “thank god(s) for the internet”.

Vancouver

1. Sex Ed-nothing being taught in schools regarding LGBTQ sexual education

Winnipeg

1. “Bi-bashing”-lack of understanding of meaning of bi-sexuality leads to misinformed assumptions about bisexual individuals.
2. “People thinking you’re going through a phase”-causes trans/gay youth to deny who they are to make others happy-“make them afraid to be themselves”. “The staff (at my school) are open, supportive and tries their best. We even have gay teachers that are happily welcomed.”
3. Resources-teachers feel that it is ok not to discuss information on the LGBTQ community because no one is “openly gay” at that school. Results in youth getting their information from friends. Lack of information also fosters use of incorrect and often degrading language by heterosexual peers. Teachers should be covering “gender identities and sexual orientation in health class even if they don’t think there any LGBTQ students are in their school.” “We really need teachers to acknowledge homophobia in classes and explain to students that it is a form of discrimination-also that slurs are discriminatory”.
4. “Bi-bashing”-don’t belong to heterosexual OR homosexual communities-“people who are Bi do not want to sleep with everyone!” Adults need to discuss important issues that affect the LGBTQ+ community such as homelessness, suicide, assault/murder.
5. Lack of knowledge/discussion-GSA and student council do help but, “there needs to be a lot more done.”
6. Lack of discussion
7. Lack of Resources/Education-results in “lack of understanding which in my opinion is the source of much of the issues people of the LGBTQ community face. Especially in schools, lack of education can lead to issues such as discrimination, bullying, homophobia, transphobia, violence, etc.” Students left to get all of their information from parents, religious groups, media, etc. Need more resources and workshops on LGBTQ issues in schools-not just the odd pamphlet.
8. Resources at school-lack of openly gay/trans youth at school leads to an understanding that resources aren’t needed.
9. Bi-bashing-lack of trust of bisexual individuals-both gay and straight communities
10. Tokenizing-“Everybody wants a gay best friend, but they value that more than actually becoming friends.” “People are so much more than gay or straight, so when

people like you just because of that, it hurts because they don't like you for who you actually are." "Things like a GSA, and more conversation and openness in general can lead to more acceptance and less of a big "deal" about it.

11. Bi-bashing- "people don't believe bi-sexuality is real". "I think we need to learn more in school about gender and sexuality and the fluidity of both. Then bisexuality would be better understanding."
12. Coming out process- "The issue is that those who don't come out are feeling trapped and those who do come out are having a crazy spotlight put on them."
13. Lack of Resources

Calgary

1. Allied and Visible School Staff- a solution might be "a workshop for teachers and staff to educate them on how they can be more inclusive and proactive in identity awareness." (Infographic created by student) Educate Teachers and Staff -> They talk amongst themselves -> They share with students and open up a conversations -> students then talk amongst themselves -> Go home and open up the conversation with their families
2. Need to normalize LGBTQ in schools
3. Educators as activists and more inclusive curriculum of diverse relationships and sexuality.
4. Normatives- "Media isn't inclusive enough, so there is a lack of representation and knowledge-maintains normatives throughout generations."
5. Heteronormativity in schools
6. Mental health awareness surrounding the LGBTQ community
7. How can we create more representation in our schools? "If schools do not normalize all attractions and genders then students will feel alienated and forgotten. Some type of representation in elementary schools would be vital for the lives and futures of many, many students."
8. Talking more openly about identity/normalizing-GSA and "advocating group" are helping.
9. Representation-unwillingness to discuss LGBTQ issues.
10. Use of phobic words and slang
11. Comprehensive sexual education and collaboration with the community- "I don't know where to seek help and how to go about things safely." "Get staff on board, change curriculum, breaking gender roles and barriers."
12. Asexual awareness



TWITTER INTERACTIVE OPPORTUNITIES

A major component of the Safe Schools LGBTQ Think Tank was the interactive social media portion of the day.

Each Think Tank was set up with a corresponding Twitter account, and a social media volunteer. The social media volunteer tweeted on-going highlights from the discussions at each event. At scheduled times throughout the events, students were given the opportunity to ask questions to think tanks occurring in different cities. This allowed students to consider how their own LGBTQ community differed from those in other parts of the country.

The student participants particularly enjoyed this interactive element. In most cases the group thought of questions together based on the discussions and hot topics, the social media volunteer then helped them word the question into a concise tweet.

Below are samples taken from the twitter accounts of each think tank.

ANNAPOLIS VALLEY, NS

@AVTHINKTANK

-  Excellent topics being shared here @AVthinktank! #LGBTQthinktank #Safeschools
-  Another big concern for us and other students is representation in the media, literature and our communities. #Safeschools #Inclusivity
-  Tweet from @VanThinkTank: "Educating teachers should become a priority. Either through Pro-D or for preservice teachers. #LGBTQThinkTank #SafeSchoolsThinkTank"
-  Response from @AVThinkTank "Lesbians can get AIDS?", Inadequate health classes lead to misinformed youth! Educating teachers is a big topic here as well!"
-  Tweet from @VanThinkTank: "Question for @AVthinktank How does acceptance differ in a small town compared to a large city? Exposure? Education? #Safeschoolsthinktank"
-  Response from @AVThinkTank: "Response to @VANThinkTank: in a small town there is less diversity. #newstravelstfast"

THE VALLEY
THINKTANK

TORONTO
THINKTANK

VANCOUVER
THINKTANK

WINNIPEG
THINKTANK

SASKATOON
THINKTANK

CALGARY
THINKTANK

 Tweet from @VanThinkTank: Question for @AVthinktank: What school policies do you have concerning LGBTQ issues and how are they being implemented?
Response from @AVThinkTank: "Response to @VANThinkTank: gender neutral bathrooms, all high schools are required to have GSA's, and less gender segregation in class."

WINNIPEG, MB

@WPGTHINKTANK

-  LGBTQ youth are tired of being told that "it's just a phase" #LGBTQThinkTank #SafeSchools
-  Gender inclusive washrooms must be in all schools #transphobia #HumanRights #EveryoneHas2pee #LGBTQThinkTank #SafeSchoolsThinkTank #Peeing
-  LGBTQ-Phobic slurs need to be treated as curse words and addressed as such in schools #LGBTQThinkTank #SafeSchools #SafeSchoolsThinkTank
-  Many LGBTQ youth don't even bother trying out for sports teams out of fear of LGBTQ bullying in the locker room. #Policy #LGBTQThinkTank
-  Bisexuality Exists. Attraction can be fluid! Bisexual folks are not attracted to everyone! #BisexualVisibility #LGBTQThinkTank #SafeSchools



CALGARY, AB

@CGYTHINKTANK



In a perfect world, we wouldn't have to come out at all.



Mental Health: resources aren't accessible if they're just "out there somewhere." Safe spaces, activities, and education. #EndTheStigma



For asexual awareness, it's not who they love it's how they love! We need to stop assuming how asexual people present their love.



Pronouns are important for safety!

VANCOUVER, BC

@VANTHINKTANK



Students want to advocate for themselves and their peers, help enforce stronger policies #SafeSchoolsThinkTank #LGBTQthinktank #Safeschools



Need to improve sex ed, not just for LGBTQ but for everyone. Lack of teacher training seen as an issue. Need to start early #LGBTQThinkTank



Difference between having the sex talk and the puberty talk, need to have those discussions earlier than currently happening #LGBTQThinkTank



A lot more discussion about sexual diversity has to be done in schools, explaining that it's okay to have the feelings you have #SafeSchools



Need to have adult support when talking to school boards. Difference between talking at someone and talking with someone. #LGBTQThinkTank

The Canadian
Safe School
NETWORK