

Top Ten Tips for Creating a Safe Space for LGBTQ Students and Families

1. Use inclusive language when mentioning families. Don't assume all students live with a mom and a dad. Use the terms *parent* or *caregiver* as an alternative.
2. Create clear School rules. Post them in a space visible to all students. Use the district Anti-Slur policy as a base.
3. Interrupt all name-calling and the derogatory use of the word "gay." Keep in mind that silence can mean approval for use of the word "gay" to mean stupid.
4. When intervening in name-calling, explain to the student what the slur means and how it hurts people. Don't let your concern for saying the "wrong" thing keep you silent.
5. Read books with gay and lesbian characters or diverse family structures such as same-sex, single parent or grandparent headed households. Books provide an important mirror for students to see themselves reflected in the world.
6. Collaborate with other site-based staff to ensure inclusiveness and safety:
Elementary – Health Advocate, LSP, Nurse.
Middle and High – LGBTQ Support Liaison, LSP, Nurse, Wellness Coordinator. You don't have to do this work alone.
7. Practice with a colleague how you might answer students' questions about family diversity or gay and lesbian people.
8. Create a bulletin board with posters that reflect the diversity of the school and your community.
9. Celebrate Gay Pride! April is Gay Pride month for SFUSD. Use the Health Awareness Event to spark discussion about pride and diversity.
10. Contact SHPD for assistance in creating a safe space for all students.