



RKF: Positive, Healthy, & Inclusive Schools

Rainbow Kids & Families was started by Lawrence area elementary school parents in 2018 to ensure LGBTQIA+ children and families have access to positive, healthy, and inclusive schools.

This tool and corresponding online video provides families, teachers, and administrators with the same list of proven school features needed for LGBTQIA+ students & families to feel safe, healthy, happy, and included. Visit our website and Facebook page for more detailed resources. Installing these features will benefit all students and families.



Is Your School Positive, Healthy, & Inclusive?

Inclusive Language

- ☐ Often a family's and student's first contact with a school is through forms, whether completed online or in the school office. Are these forms friendly to different family structures? Do they use language such as 'parent/parent' or 'parent/guardian'?
- ☐ Do your forms ask for the names people want to be called and the pronouns that families use – she/her/hers; he/him/his and they/them/theirs.
- ☐ Check through student forms, handbooks and school/home communications to ensure inclusivity.
- ☐ Do you model inclusive language for students, for other staff and educators, and for parents and caregivers when talking about families?

Stopping Mean Words and Actions

- ☐ Ensure that concern for saying the wrong thing doesn't keep you and others silent. Interrupt hurtful name-calling including the derogatory use of the word "gay" and race- or gender-based slurs.
- ☐ Are you ready for teachable moments? Practice how to respond when you hear students say things like "That's gay!" "You act like a girl!" or "You're not a real family because you don't have a dad!"
- ☐ Does your professional development on bullying and harassment include the opportunity to practice interrupting and stopping bias-based name-calling or bullying and ways to respond to students' questions on diverse families?

Diverse Books and Images

- ☐ Do the books in your school reflect your students' lives? Do your books offer perspectives on families not found in your school?
- ☐ Do classroom and hallway images show diverse family structures, people of different races, gender expressions, ethnicities and abilities? Do the displays encourage respect for all people?
- ☐ Are your students exposed to diverse, positive role models in literature?

Source: www.welcomingschools.org

School & Classroom Climate

School and Classroom Climate – Setting a Positive, Inclusive Tone for All

- ☐ When someone walks into your school, can they tell that all students and their families are welcome? Is there student work featured in the hallways highlighting both diversity and commonalities?
- ☐ Have you held events recognizing and celebrating family diversity that welcome all children and their families to your school community?
- ☐ Do staff and educators treat all families with respect and avoid stereotyping or judgment when communicating with two-mom and two-dad, single-parent, racially diverse and/or multi-linguistic families?
- ☐ Do all students have an adult in the school they can connect with? Do families know their children are respected and encouraged to achieve? Connections with families are crucial to children's lives.
- ☐ Have you created and implemented clear classroom and schoolwide agreements with your students regarding respect, caring for classmates and not hurting each other with words or actions? Do students know that this means no put-downs about who someone is or who their family is?
- ☐ Do your anti-bullying policies specifically name groups that are bullied or harassed more frequently?

Source: www.welcomingschools.org

“Our school had certain inclusive features in place like the use of proper pronouns by his classroom teacher. However, this was not consistent across the school and resulted in my child feeling anxious and getting bullied.”

- Lawrence Parent

“By doing simple things, like removing binary references of boys versus girls, in activities and curriculum, makes a huge difference”
- Lawrence Teache

- *Lawrence Teacher*

Action Steps for Families, Care Providers, & Teachers

- Connect with Rainbow Kids & Families via Facebook or Website. This will give you access to member networks, educational materials, advocacy, and a range of fun, informative activities.
- Share this form and the Inclusive Features Video on the www.rainbowkidsandfamilies.org home page with classroom teachers, school counselors, and principals. Ask directly how they answer these questions.
- Request an Individual Gender Identity Plan to ensure your child's gender is respected and supported.
- Most local school districts have stated they are committed to supporting our kids, but if you still feel your school and district are not responsive or supportive, reach out to Rainbow Kids

Resources

www.welcomingschools.org

www.glsen.org

www.glaad.org

www.pflag.org

www.transyouthequality.org

www.hrc.org

www.genderspectrum.org www.thetrevorproject.org

translifeline.org & Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860

www.childrensmercy.org/departments-and-clinics/endocrinology/gender-pathway-services

Visit rainbowkidsandfamilies.org



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