

Information for Allies



In the last few days the Pride Centre of Edmonton has been contacted by concerned people from all over Alberta who are impacted by harmful stereotypes about trans people and trans issues, prompted by backlash against Alberta Education's new Guidelines for Best Practices on accommodation of trans children.

At times like these, speaking up as an ally can be a tremendous help. You can help by learning more about the issue, informing your friends and correcting harmful stereotypes about LGBTQ people.

Information you can share:

1. Trans children should be able to use the bathroom as their peers do.

To get a better understanding of the issue of finding a safe bathroom, read these FAQs about gender and washrooms, <http://www.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights/transgender/restroom-faq#Q5>

And check out and share writer and performer Ivan Coyote's TedX talk: *We all need a safe place to pee* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUKAVcj9NVA>

2. Many schools offer gender inclusive access to bathrooms without incident.

It is untrue that allowing trans students to use the bathroom creates problems for schools. While the idea of inclusive access to bathrooms is new for some, it has a proven record of success. Recent research in the United States surveyed 17 school districts 600,000 students and found no incidents of violence or unsafety.

You can read a summary of that research at: <http://www.seventeen.com/life/school/news/a31352/in-unsurprising-news-trans-students-have-caused-zero-incidents-in-public-bathrooms/>

3. Reducing gendered space promotes safety for students.

Bathroom use by children with diverse gender presentation poses no risk to other children. On the contrary, people who are trans experience among the highest rates of violence and themselves need to be protected. One widely circulated document falsely alleges that allowing trans students to use bathrooms will lead to an increase in sexual assault – an allegation which is clearly refuted by sexual assault service providers. You can gain accurate information about the important issue of sexual assault, from the Alberta Association of Sexual Assault Services at www.aasas.ca

Supports for trans people

If you or a child you know are impacted by stereotypes and discrimination, supports are here to help.

- **Kids Help Phone:** Kids who have questions about gender identity or LGBTQ issues, professional counselling and resources are available 24/7 at www.kidshelpphone.ca or 1800-668-6868.
- **Pride Centre of Edmonton:** In person support groups related to gender identity and trans issues for all ages. Training about LGBTQ issues. Connection and referral to local supports. 780-488-3234 or www.pridecentreofedmonton.org
- **Calgary Sexual Health Centre** offers information, education and counselling about LGBTQ issues. www.calgarysexualhealth.ca 403-283-5580
- **Alberta's Bullying Help Line** offers information and referrals about bullying issues. [1-888-456-2323](tel:1-888-456-2323) or bullyfreealberta.ca