

Improving Schools, Improving Ourselves:  
Upstanding and Advocating for Students,  
Colleagues, and Self

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**Agenda**

- Key Terms and Concepts
- Common Behaviors and Misconceptions
- School Policies that Protect
- Upstanding
- Common Concerns
- Curricula
- Final Thoughts

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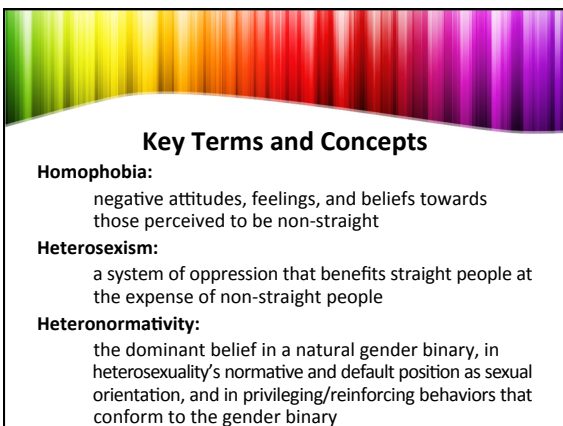
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**Key Terms and Concepts**

**Homophobia:**  
negative attitudes, feelings, and beliefs towards those perceived to be non-straight

**Heterosexism:**  
a system of oppression that benefits straight people at the expense of non-straight people

**Heteronormativity:**  
the dominant belief in a natural gender binary, in heterosexuality's normative and default position as sexual orientation, and in privileging/reinforcing behaviors that conform to the gender binary

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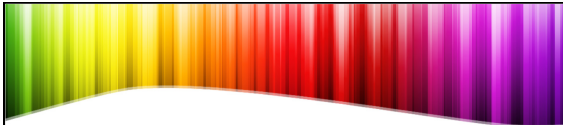
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**Common Behaviors and Misconceptions**

**Micro-aggressions**  
 the commonplace or casual degradation of any marginalized group, whether intentional or unintentional  
 [e.g., remarking with surprise that a black student is articulate; asking an Asian student where she is "really from"; asking a student when if his mom and dad will be coming to parent-teacher conferences]

**What other examples have you heard or experienced?**

**Are these micro-aggressions problematic?**

**What can you do when you hear a student or colleague's micro-aggression?**

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**Trans\* and Gender Non-Conforming Micro-aggressions**

- Mis-gendering
- Use of wrong name
- Bathroom issues

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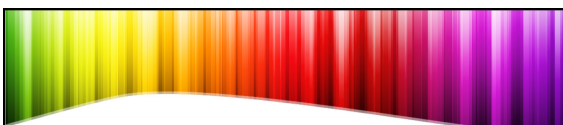
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**"That's so gay"** (A common micro-aggression)

**Why is this phrase problematic?**

**Is the word "gay" a bad word? Should students be able to use it? In what contexts?**

**Do you see students, teachers, and administrators shut down students who use the word gay? How can we turn this interaction into a conversation?**

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**Skills Needed:**

- Knowledge of micro-aggressions in order to identify them
- Understanding of micro-aggressions' violence in order to want to intervene
- Student-accessible language to explain why micro-aggressions are problematic
- Confidence to believe that your voice is powerful and important in creating a safe space for students

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**School Policies that Protect**

- Trans\* Bathroom and Locker Room Policies
- Title IX
- "Don't Say Gay"
- Administrative Support
- Non-Discrimination

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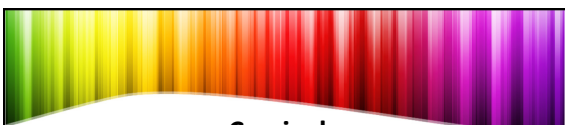
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**Curricula**

Do you include LGBTQ+ figures, issues, or language in your classroom?

Why are LGBTQ+ figures so important to include?

What messages do teachers and administrators send when they exclude LGBTQ+ figures from the classroom or erase figures' LGBTQ+ identities?

How can you include LGBTQ+ figures, issues, or language in your school?

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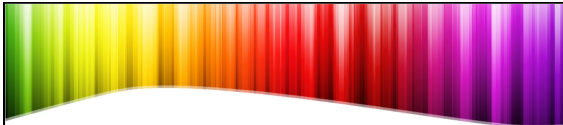
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### Upstanders

An upstander is one who sees an injustice and speaks out against it instead of allowing it to occur [being a bystander]

Upstanders interrupt bullying behavior by **identifying** problem behavior, **explaining** why the perceived behavior is unacceptable, and **ensuring** the safety of those who may be affected

"Christine, calling someone names is not ok. We don't want to make anyone else feel bad about who they are, just like you wouldn't want someone calling you names."  
"Jeanette, I noticed that Christine said some unkind words to you. Can we talk about that?"

**Why is it important to be an upstander?**

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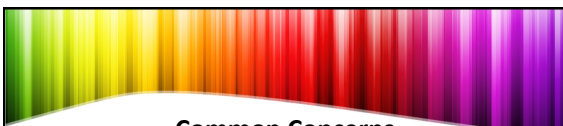
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### Common Concerns

**In your opinion, why might teachers and administrators not up-stand when they see homophobic and transphobic bullying and micro-aggressions?**

**How does this reluctance to up-stand reinforce heteronormativity in schools?**

**How do we encourage more teachers and administrators to be up-standers, especially for LGBTQ+ youth?**

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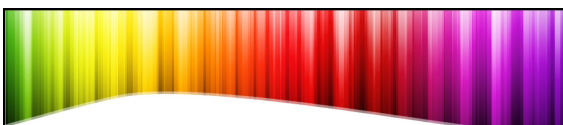
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### Practice Time

Please see the "Case Scenario" handout you received earlier today. For each scenario we assign your table:

- Read through completely to make sure you understand the issues at hand
- Discuss the appropriate course of action and how you would handle the situation
- Select a recorder to jot down notes on your group's discussion, as you'll be reporting out to the large group

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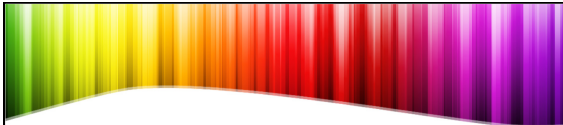
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**Final Thoughts**

**GLSEN recommends four key aspects of schools that make queer students feel safer:**

- 1) Staff that interrupt heteronormativity
- 2) Positive examples of LGBTQ+ figures in the classroom
- 3) A student group for queer students (GSA)
- 4) Gender and sexuality inclusive policies

**How can we make these aspects part of all students' school experiences?**

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