



Supporting LGBTQ+ Students & Families

The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships highlight six key tenets of effective family-school partnerships that support student success and well-being. LGBTQ+ students and families continue to face unique challenges while navigating school systems. PTAs can support LGBTQ+ students and families by using the Standards to advocate for and with them in a variety of ways.

Welcome All Families

- Create a welcoming physical environment that signals LGBTQ+ inclusivity through visual cues like safe space stickers, a rainbow flag, diverse and inclusive artwork and pronoun pins.
- Provide training and professional development to ensure educators and school staff have the tools to confidently provide a space that allows LGBTQ+ youth and families to thrive.

Use Inclusive Language to Effectively Communicate

- Ensure all school and PTA forms have options for LGBTQ+ identities. Avoid defaulting to “Mom & Dad” when referring to family structures.
- Create space for individuals to ask and share names and pronouns.

Support Student Success

- For students to feel successful, they need to feel safe. Teachers can help to create safe learning environments by using the name and pronouns that children request.
- Incorporating LGBTQ+ topics into the curriculum, in ways that make LGBTQ+ students feel seen and heard, can also support student safety and success.

Quick Facts

- Between 2 million and 3.7 million children under the age of 18 have an LGBTQ+ parent
- Nearly all LGBTQ+ students (98.8%) have heard anti-LGBTQ+ remarks at school and 53% reported hearing homophobic language from teachers or school staff
- 69% of LGBTQ+ students reported feeling unsafe at school due to their sexual orientation or gender identity
- 59% of LGBTQ+ students experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school
- Only 26% of LGBTQ students always feels safe in their school classrooms (HRC report, 2018)
- Only 20% of LGBTQ students were taught positive representations of LGBTQ+ people, history or events in their classes.

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Speak Up for Every Child

- Speaking up for every child means advocating for policies that support LGBTQ+ inclusion and safety. Encourage your state to pass nondiscrimination laws and state regulations to protect LGBTQ+ students.
- Encourage your district to expand and enumerate district policies that protect LGBTQ+ students.

Share Power

- LGBTQ+ families and their children deserve to have a voice in their school community and the decisions that affect them. Establishing a Gender and Sexuality Alliance can help LGBTQ+ youth have a collective voice.

Collaborate with Community

- Partner with local organizations to educate the community about LGBTQ+ issues and to offer resources LGBTQ+ families and youth. If you're not sure where to start, visit [Welcoming Schools](#) or connect with your local LGBTQ+ community centers or local chapters of GLSEN or PFLAG.

References

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