**Discrimination in accommodation, service and facility**  
*BC Human Rights Code*  

(1) A person must not, without a bona fide and reasonable justification,  
(a) deny to a person or class of persons any accommodation, service or facility customarily available to the public, or  
(b) discriminate against a person or class of persons regarding any accommodation, service or facility customarily available to the public because of the race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age of that person or class of persons.  

(2) A person does not contravene this section by discriminating  
(c) on the basis of sex, if the discrimination relates to the maintenance of public decency or to the determination of premiums or benefits under contracts of life or health insurance, or  
(d) on the basis of physical or mental disability or age, if the discrimination relates to the determination of premiums or benefits under contracts of life or health insurance.

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**e. “Elementary students are too young for this club in school.”**  
Although the structure of the club will be different for younger students due to their different developmental levels, the spirit of welcoming inclusion is appropriate for all ages.

**f. “Why not a straight club?”**  
This is also a straight club. It’s for everyone.

7. **Start one. Bring snacks. Everyone likes snacks.**

**Book Resource:**  
*Homophobia: Deal with it and turn prejudice into pride*  
By Steven Soloman, Illustrated by Nick Johnson  

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**BC Teachers’ Federation**  
**LGBTQ2S+ Action Group (CASJ)**  
For information contact:  
Todd Patrick  
Assistant Director of Social Justice  
Professional and Social Issues Division  
Phone: 604-871-1850  
Toll-free: 1-800-663-9163, local 1850  
email: tpatrick@bctf.ca  
Resources for classroom teachers and service providers on LGBTQ2S+ issues can be found at  
bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=6106

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**Starting a GSA in BC elementary schools**
1. What are the rules in your school around starting clubs?
Follow the same rules that every other school club follows—sometimes this is done with school rules, sometimes by district policy. Just like every other club, it’s a good idea to let your administrator know of your plans.

2. How will you welcome students?
Advertise! Let other teachers know your students know.
- Start with finding a highly visible bulletin board in your school to showcase the diversity of families.
- Show short clips of current events or themed topics (e.g., Shane Koyczan—To This Day video) and invite students to discuss at lunch.
- Make posters. Make announcements. Let students know that this is not a club exclusively for LGBTQ2S+-identified people but is a safe social space for every student.
- Ideal for Grades 5–7, but that may vary from school to school. Many individuals are comfortable with that age range.

3. What will the focus of your club be?
Action? Social time?
Some students may want to make a global change. Some may want to chat and watch movies. Some may want to support a friend or seek companionship. What support do your students need? It’s a good idea to have some activities planned, as you might for any club.
Some suggestions can be found at goo.gl/RWLNch starting at page 7. Vancouver Coastal Health identified several different ideas for focus:
- the red section provides ideas for personal growth for GSA leaders/facilitators;
- the orange section provides ideas for strengthening your GSA group;
- the yellow section provides ideas for bringing in outside resources;
- the green section provides ideas for supporting your school;
- the blue section provides ideas for supporting your school district;
- the purple section provides ideas for celebrating special days (for example, Trans Day of Remembrance or International Day).

4. What will you call it?
Traditionally, high schools have called them GSAs—Gay-Straight Alliances. Many schools have changed over time to be more inclusive of all genders and sexualities—Gender and Sexuality Alliance. Some elementary schools use names like Rainbow Club, Ally Club or Friendship Club. It’s up to you to determine which best fits your school culture.

5. How will you let parents know about it?

6. How will you speak to opponents?
   a. “What’s the purpose of this club?”
      To create a safe space for every student, regardless of how they identify. It’s about finding new friends and developing leadership skills within our students.
   b. “Why are you doing this at school?”
      Because our province, district, and school all have a LGBTQ2S+ anti-discrimination policy and this is one way of putting it into practice. Our students spend 35 or more hours a week at school, and this is one avenue to provide them support. Research shows that BC students in schools with active GSAs have lower suicide rates—it saves lives!
   c. “Are you excluding others?”
      The purpose of a GSA is to include everyone, regardless of how they identify (gay, straight, trans, genderfluid, Two–Spirit, etc.)
   d. “Are you teaching my child to be gay?”
      Sexual orientation and gender identity are not choices, nor can they be taught. Whether a child self-identifies as LGBTQ2S+ or not, we are providing social support within the bounds of the BC Human Rights Code.