

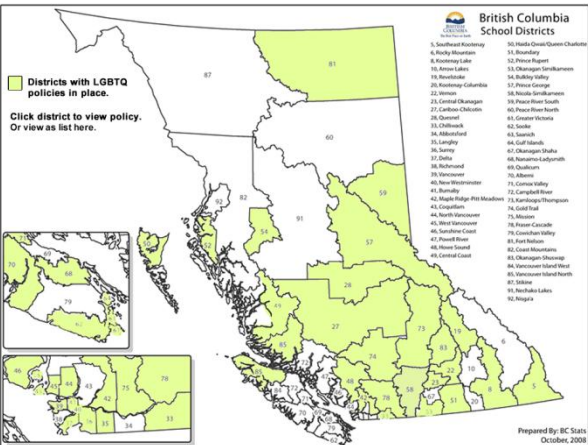


Spotlight on LGBTQ



“Where were you when I needed you?” Although not directed at him, these angry words incited Coquitlam teacher Murray Corren to commit himself to eliminating homophobia and heterosexism in the BC public-school system. Among many other achievements, Corren was responsible for the adoption of Social Justice 12 as a Ministry-credited course, and together with James Chamberlain, did the groundwork that led to the Supreme Court overturning the Surrey School Board’s banning of LGBTQ books. Corren also played an important role in the legalization of same-sex marriage in Canada.

Part of his acceptance speech for his BCTF Honorary Life Time Membership, Corren’s moving account of the impact of a young man’s words reminded 2016 AGM delegates of the potential each and every teacher has to harm or empower LGBTQ students and colleagues. While most teachers may never achieve as much for the LGBTQ community as Corren, it is essential that we all examine our own practices and behaviours and the implications they may have. What are we doing to create safe and inclusive spaces? Is our choice of language communicating heterosexist assumptions? How often do we select teaching resources that acknowledge and legitimize LGBTQ people?



Thanks to the hard work of teacher activists, almost three-quarters of British Columbia’s school districts have LGBTQ policies in place, as seen on the [BCStats interactive map](#) (left). Teachers interested in bringing an LGBTQ policy to their district can click on any of these 42 school districts to read examples of existing policies. For more support in advocating for a policy in your school district, contact Susan Ruzic, Assistant Director of Social Justice, at sruzic@bctf.ca.

The adoption of an LGBTQ policy is only the first step your district can take in eliminating homophobia, heterosexism, and transphobia. A policy has little worth unless it is fully implemented. This involves providing the necessary supports to teachers, including professional development and access to resources, which will allow them to create welcoming and inclusive spaces. The document [Passed your LGBTQ Policy?](#) provides strategies to help ensure the full implementation of LGBTQ policies.

BC Social Justice Program Calendar of Events

April

- 4–10: National Wildlife Week
- 13: International Day of Pink
- 10–17: Prevention of Violence Against Women Week
- 12: Equal Pay Day
- 15: Day of Silence (against LGBTQ name calling)
- 22: Earth Day



April 4 is **Refugee Rights Day** commemorating the 36th anniversary of the Supreme Court's 1985 Singh decision recognizing that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects refugees' fundamental rights. The Canadian Council for Refugees' [Refugee Rights Day web page](#) offers resources and recommended actions. The CASJ [Refugee Resources page](#) also provides resources to use in your classrooms.

Teachers can find resources, lesson plans, and workshops for use during **National Wildlife Week** from **April 4–10**, and **Earth Day** on **April 22**, on the [Environmental Justice Action Group web pages](#).

The [Status of Women web pages](#) contain resources and lesson plans to use in your classroom during **Prevention of Violence Against Women Week**, from **April 10–17**.

Equal Pay Day, on **April 12**, is aimed at raising awareness of the gap between women's and men's wages. More information and an Equal Pay Day kit are available on the [National Committee on Pay Equity website](#).

Resources for the **Day of Silence against LGBTQ Name Calling** on **April 15** are available in this issue of *Seeds of Social Justice*, and on the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's [Day of Silence web page](#).

LGBTQ Resources



The BCTF Pride Kit contains materials such as pamphlets, posters, stickers, note pads, and pencils. Teachers can reserve this kit and distribute its materials to participants at a pride event or at a pride-themed conference table.




The new **Day of Pink** poster includes lesson plans to help teachers address homophobia and transphobia on the **International Day of Pink, April 13**, and throughout the year. [Elementary](#) and [secondary](#) school versions of this poster were mailed to every school in February, and PDF versions can be downloaded on the LGBTQ [Posters, bookmarks, booklets and brochures](#) web page. Cette affiche est aussi disponible [en français](#).

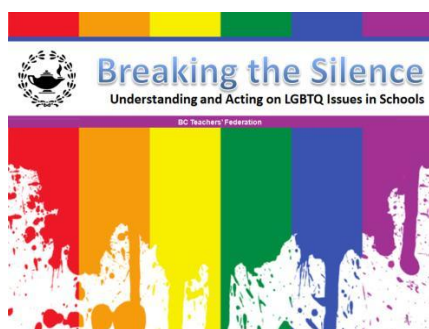


By displaying this sticker prominently in their classrooms, teachers can openly declare themselves as allies, identify themselves as safe and supportive people for LGBTQ students and staff, and pledge to make their classrooms welcoming and inclusive. The accompanying guide [Being an LGBTQ Ally](#) provides resources and strategies to support teachers in fulfilling the commitment made in posting this sticker.

To request hard copies of these and other BCTF LGBTQ resources, email socialjustice@bctf.ca. Please include the name and number required of each item along with your mailing address.

LGBTQ Workshops

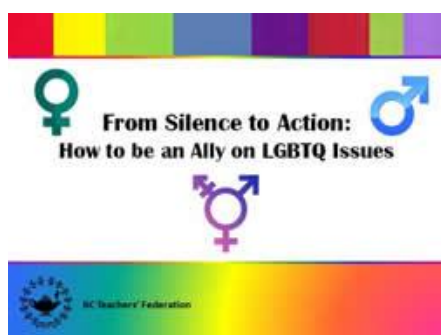
The following LGBTQ workshops can be reserved free of charge for your school or local using the [Faxback Workshop Request Form](#) .



This action-oriented workshop will allow you to examine how negative myths and LGBTQ stereotypes impact all students and develop effective strategies to make your school safer. You will work through case studies, develop short- and long-term interventions to deal with LGBTQ harassment, and examine lesson plans that address homophobic and transphobic name calling. Find out how homophobia negatively impacts all students in your classroom and how you can educate your students to be change makers.



This workshop will help teachers develop an understanding of the risks and protective factors facing trans* students, gain increased familiarity with terminology used by the trans* communities, and raise awareness of gender identity and gender expression. Best practices for supporting a student through gender transition within the school system will be covered. Although the focus is on trans* students, gender-inclusive schools help all students to feel safe at school.



This workshop focuses on building capacity for secondary teachers to be allies in supporting LGBTQ youth within schools. The curricular integration component helps teachers embed LGBTQ issues into their existing courses. Participants will work through real-life scenarios and develop concrete action plans for dealing with LGBTQ issues. This workshop is highly recommended for secondary teachers and students who want to create a school-wide action plan to reduce or prevent homophobia and transphobia that will result in an LGBTQ-positive school climate for all students.



This BCTF workshop provides participants with essential information about sexual health. The topic of consent is discussed in detail. Workshop participants will become familiar with several recommended resources and some fundamental strategies for teaching the mandated sexual health curriculum to BC students at all grade levels in public schools.

LGBTQ Alliance Partners



Out in Schools is a BCTF partner that offers film-based presentations to engage students and teachers on issues related to homophobia, transphobia, and bullying. Visit the [Out in Schools website](#) for more information and to book a presentation.

BC students aged 12–19 are invited to participate in the [Rise Against Homophobia! Out in Schools Youth Short Film Contest](#) by submitting films that address LGBTQ youth experiences and challenge homophobia and transphobia. Selected films will be screened at the Vancouver Queer Film Festival. The deadline for submissions is **May 20, 2016**.

Sharing Social Justice Resources on TeachBC



The [TeachBC website](#) contains lesson plans for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Lessons addressing all areas of the curriculum can be found on this site and downloaded for free.



[Examining Homophobia in Sports](#) was created by the Committee for Action on Social Justice's LGBTQ Action Group. The discussion, drama, and critical-thinking activities in this guide will support students in examining how gender stereotypes are re-enforced through sports in school.

We invite you to take a few minutes to explore this and other LGBTQ lesson plans on the TeachBC site, and to post some of the social justice lessons you are using in your classroom.

Opportunities for Members



The BCTF International Solidarity Committee invites you to apply to participate in a

Non-sexist and inclusive pedagogy workshop

Leading up to the Tri-national Conference for the Defense of Public Education, Costa Rica and Honduras educators represent Costa Rica and Honduras. Margaret will lead BC teachers through activities drawn from Central American non-sexist pedagogy workshops. The product of 15 years of collaboration among

Central American teachers' unions and the BCTF-funded non-governmental organization's Codemovement Canada, will also be through with our commitment in empowering teachers from a number of Central American countries to support their students in developing non-sexist attitudes and behaviours.

Friday, May 6-8, 2016
Camp Alexandra
South Surrey, BC

Participants will:

- become familiar with a Central American non-sexist pedagogy model.
- compare challenges faced by teachers in BC and Central America.
- develop tools to incorporate non-sexist pedagogy into their classrooms.
- plan on sharing these tools and knowledge with BC teachers.
- develop an action plan in solidarity with our Central American partners.

Download an application form on the Opportunities for Members page of the BCTF website.

For more information, contact Barb Ryeburn: barb@bctf.ca or Susan Ruck: susan@bctf.ca, BCTF Assistant Directors of Social Justice.

Application deadline: 5:00 p.m. on April 11, 2016

From **May 6–8**, Costa Rican and Honduran educators will lead a group of BC teachers through activities drawn from Central American **Non-sexist and Inclusive Pedagogy workshops**.

The BCTF invites teachers interested in learning more about the work of our Latin American partners and who are committed to sharing knowledge and skills gained from this workshop to apply to participate.

More information and an [application form](#) are available on the [International Solidarity](#) section of the [Opportunities for Members page](#) of the BCTF website. The application deadline is **April 11 at 5:00 p.m.**

Social Justice Grants



This year, teachers are using BCTF Local Social Justice Grant funds to engage colleagues and students in a variety of projects.

In North Vancouver, teacher-librarians are leading a team of teachers in an inquiry that involves Aboriginal talking circles, story sharing, symbolism and community elders to teach groups of students tolerance and compassion for minority groups and an appreciation of diversity.

Teachers in Oliver are installing an organic indoor vegetable garden that will be utilized by classrooms, lunch programs, and environmental clubs in two schools. This initiative will provide students and staff with on-going opportunities to practise sustainable-living principles.

There are still funds available for Local Social Justice Grants, but the **April 15** application deadline is fast approaching. More information and an [application form](#) are available on the social justice [Grants and Funds web page](#). For additional information or support with your application, contact Barb Ryeburn at bryeburn@bctf.ca.

Barb Ryeburn
Assistant Director of Social Justice
BC Teachers' Federation
100-550 West 6th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5S 4P2
604-871-1821
Toll free: 1-800-663-9163
bryeburn@bctf.ca