



International
School Counselor Association

United in Diversity: Counselors as Allies

June 17, 2020

**Part 2 – Creating Safe Spaces for LGBTQIA+ Students
in International Schools**



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Introductions

- **Shira Fisher** –Head of Student Services & Secondary Counselor, Chatsworth International School, Singapore (Pronouns: she/her)
- **Stephanie Finnell** – Counseling Department Head, Grade 6 & 7 Counselor, American International School of Bucharest, Romania (Pronouns: she/her)
- **Chrystal Kelly** – High School Counselor, The American International School of Muscat, Oman (Pronouns: she/her)
- **Keith Layman** – Counseling Department Head, International School of Dusseldorf (Pronouns: he/him)

Overview

- Opening Remarks
- Ethical Responsibilities as a School Counselor
- At-Risk Population
- Intersectionalities, Identities and Terminology
- Laws around the world
- Experiences: Coming Out is Not a One Time Event for Students
- How Counselors Can Be Allies and Advocate
- Resources and Next Steps

Understandings and Agreements

1. What this chat is?

- a. The beginning of a journey exploring how counselors can support themselves and their communities in discussing issues related to LGBTQIA+ issues (along with diversity, equity, inclusion?)
- b. Defining ally and centering conversation around that
- c. A space to process our own feelings connected to the work
- d. A step towards understanding our own intersectionality - knowledge of self (as described by Dr. Ken)
- e. A space for those with privilege to listen with intent and to start looking inward

2. What this chat isn't?

- a. This is NOT a space to debate what is right vs. wrong



Creating Safe Spaces for LGBTQIA+ Students in International Schools

Ethical Responsibilities as a School Counselor

ASCA/ISCA Ethical Standards

- **Duty to Address Personal Bias:**
 - First tenant of ASCA Ethical Standards preamble states, “All students have the right to be respected, be treated with dignity and have access to a comprehensive school counseling program that advocates for and affirms all students from diverse populations including but not limited to: ethnic/racial identity, nationality, age, social class, economic status, abilities/disabilities, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity, emancipated minors, wards of the state, homeless youth and incarcerated youth.”
 - Our duty is to take the initiative to provide a safe environment in which these students can succeed (risk factors).

ASCA/ISCA Ethical Standards

- **Implicit Bias** (Kirwin Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity):
 - Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner (blindspots)
 - Natural tendency of the brain to sift, sort, and categorize information about the world that forms these biases (debiasing techniques)
 - Benefits of being aware of these biases is that you can take a more active role in overcoming social stereotypes, discrimination, and prejudice ... what we are doing with these ISCA chats!
 - **As school counselors, our mission is to advocate for all students, not just those with whom our personal values agree.**

An At-Risk Population

- LGBTQIA+ young people compared with heterosexuals are:
 - More than twice as likely to feel suicidal (Kann 2016)
 - Over four times as likely to attempt suicide (Kann 2016)
 - Rates are especially high for bisexual teens (Marshal 2011)
- According to one study (Reisner 2015):
 - One third of transgender youth have seriously considered suicide
 - One in five has made a suicide attempt
- ***Strong family bonds, safe schools and support from caring adults can all protect LGBTQIA+ youth from depression and suicidality (Committee on Adolescence 2013)***

Additional Risk Factors

- Rejection
- Verbal / Physical Harassment or Bullying
- Homelessness / Being Kicked Out
- Drug / Alcohol Abuse and Dependence
- Safe Sex / STI Risks
- Health Care
- Religious, Community, or Cultural Negative Perceptions
- Laws

Intersectionalities and Identities

- When one's identity makes up more than one intersectionality, one may experience increased harassment, stigma, or bias.
- Individuals that identify as having a disability, are from "minority" racial/cultural backgrounds, belong to varying religious backgrounds, women, or individuals with lower incomes, as well as identifying as LGBTQIA+.
- Even within the LGBTQIA+ community different identities are seen to have varying levels of status and acceptance.

LGBTQIA+

Lesbian



Gay



Bisexual



Transgender



Queer/Questioning



Intersex



Asexual



+ (inclusive of all gender/sexualities in queer umbrella)

Terminology

Lesbian/Gay - same sex attraction

Bisexual - attracted to men or women

Pansexual - attracted to any person regardless of gender identification

Asexual - little to no sexual attraction

Demisexual - little to no sexual attraction unless there is an emotional connection

Graysexual - Experiences occasional sexual attraction

CIS Gender - gender matches the gender of birth

Transgender - Gender identity does not match gender at birth

Gender Non Conforming - Expression of gender is outside traditional norms of masculine/feminine

Non Binary - Does not identify as male or female

Gender Queer - Gender identification outside binary

Gender Fluid - Gender identity is fluid/shifts

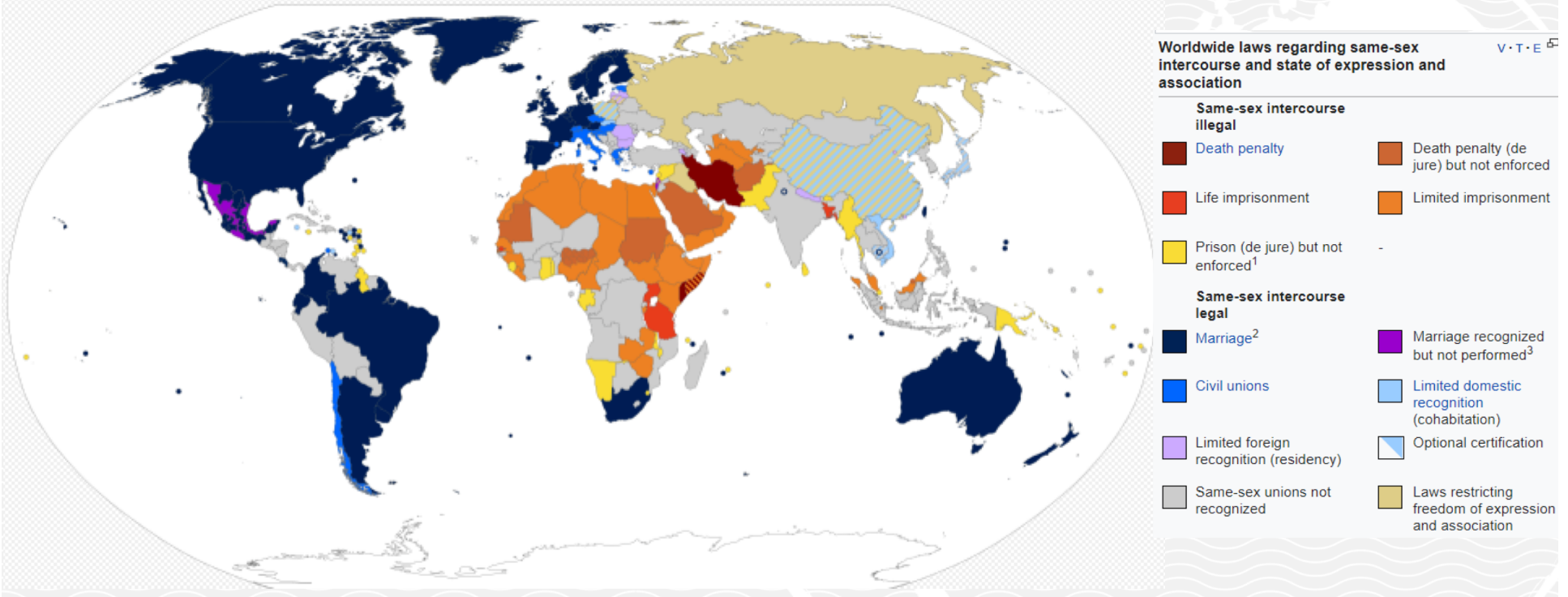
Gender Neutral - Prefers not to be described as a particular gender. "They"

Intersex - Born with biological sex characteristics that aren't traditional male/female

Pronouns - Gender specific or neutral pronouns used to describe or refer to oneself.

Conversations

Worldwide Laws - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_by_country_or_territory



Additional Resource:

<https://www.humandignitytrust.org/lgbt-the-law/map-of-criminalisation/>

Laws - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_by_country_or_territory

- Understanding the legal landscape in your country of residence is important when thinking about supporting students, staff, or parents that identify as LGBTQIA+
- There are many considerations in whether one's country of residence or home country has criminalized, decriminalized, or legalized aspects of LGBTQIA+ activities/rights.
- Understanding these nuances can be essential in the safety of LGBTQIA+ youth.
- Understanding staff or parent particular situations or difficulties may be useful in understanding their experiences and support needs.

Conversations

Experiences: Coming Out (Keith)



Coming Out: Shira



Timeline:

Friends age: 14

Parents: age 16

Lifeline: Panther Pride Group in 94/95, this was only the 2nd year it had been at my high school. It was a safe haven to the 6-8 of us that were out or semi-out.

Coming Out is Not a One Time Event

- Although most LGBTQIA+ have a “coming out story”, there is not just one story of coming out.
- Every new acquaintance, workplace, school, environment, etc LGBTQIA+ identified individuals will have to risk assess, and determine their own personal comfort and safety in being open.
- Individuals who are still figuring out their identities may have multiple versions of coming out that can create additional layers of fear, judgement and worries about acceptance, especially when modifying, changing or have fluid identities.

Conversations

How School Counselors Can Be Allies and Advocate

- Encourage/support student initiation of LGBTQIA+ support groups/campaigns
- Connect with other counselors/schools in your region who have been successful in initiatives such as support clubs and awareness campaigns
- [Survey](#) your school population on the perception of school safety for LGBTQIA+ Students



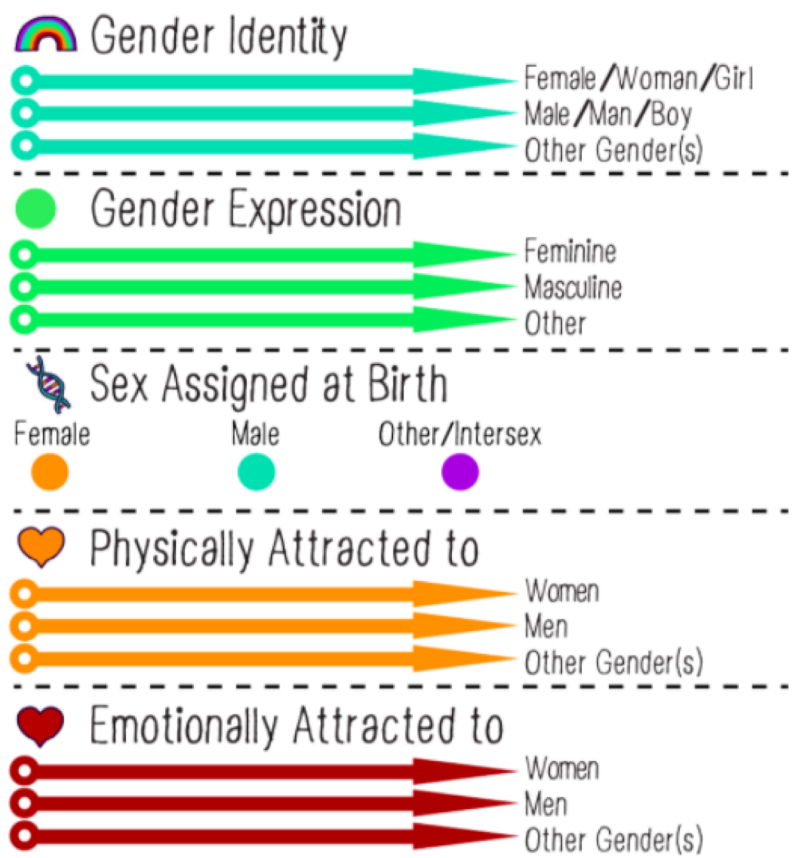
How School Counselors Can Be Allies and Advocate

- Display visible signs of allyship (in your space, on your laptop, in your email signature)
- Normalize the use of pronouns
- Support/encourage [student voice](#)
- Facilitate [Safe Zone](#) trainings for staff
- Advocate for incorporation of LGBTQIA+ learning
 - Ex: Gender Unicorn (visual on next slide)



The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

[Gender Unicorn Video](#)

International School Counselor Association

Conversations

LGBTQIA+ RESOURCES

Below are a number of resources designed to help you understand and support the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and many other terms (such as non-binary and pansexual) population at your school.

General information

- [LGBT rights by country or territory](#) from Wikipedia
- [State Maps of Laws & Policies](#) (for United States) from Human Rights Campaign
- [Ethical Standards for School Counselors](#) from American School Counselor Association
- [Understanding Implicit Bias](#) (Kirwin Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity-The Ohio State University)
- [Exposing our Blindspots: How to Tackle Unconscious Bias as a Therapist](#) from Lyra Health

Articles

- [The ABC's of L.G.B.T.Q.I.A.+](#) from The New York Times
- [Pride flags: All of the flags you might see at Pride and what they mean](#) by PinkNews
- [Away from school pressures, children who defy gender norms blossom at home](#) from CNN
- [Privilege, Power, and Pride: Intersectionality within the LGBT Community](#) from Impakter

OTHER CURRICULUM RESOURCES

Articles

- [The Gender Spectrum](#) from Teaching Tolerance

Books

- [Love is Love Collection](#) (list of 109 books to use) from tmarlowe

Elementary School

- "All Are Welcome" by Alexandra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman
- "Julián Is a Mermaid" by Jessica Love
- "Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag" by Rob Sanders
- "Queer Heroes: Meet 52 LGBTQ Heroes From the Past and Present" by Arabelle Sicardi
- "Pink Is for Boys" by Robb Pearlman
- "A Family Is a Family Is a Family" by Sara O'Leary
- "George" by Alex Gino
- "The Boy and the Bindi" by Vivek Shraya

Presentation

- [Safe Zone Presentation for Staff](#) from American International School of Bucharest

Toolkit & Lesson Plans

- [Toolkit for Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth](#) from Advocates for Youth
- [Lesson Plans for Building Allies for GLBTQ Youth](#) from Advocates for Youth
- [Best Practices: Creating an LGBT-Inclusive School](#) from Teaching Tolerance
- [PBS Teacher's Guide & Resources to Support LGBTQ Youth](#) from PBS
- [PBS NewsHour's LGBT Lesson Plans](#) from PBS
- [LGBTQ History & Why It Matters](#) from Facing History And Ourselves
- [Bringing LGBTQ Upstanders Into Your Classroom](#) from Facing History And Ourselves
- [Guide to Being an Ally](#) from the Trevor Project



LGBTQIA+ Resources on the ISCA Website

GENDER & SEXUAL IDENTITY

Topics



RACE & ETHNICITY
RELIGION
ABILITY
CLASS
IMMIGRATION
GENDER & SEXUAL IDENTITY
BULLYING & BIAS
RIGHTS & ACTIVISM

Teach the facts about sex assigned at birth, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, and learn how to advocate for LGBTQ youth. Whether you're just becoming familiar with gender diversity or ready to start a gay-straight alliance at your school, our resources can help you and your colleagues shape inclusive policies and empower vulnerable students.

“Binary notions of gender, biology and sexual orientation exclude large swaths of human diversity. This diversity can be better understood by using spectrum-based models. Spectra make room for anyone whose experiences do not narrowly fit into binary choices such as man/woman, feminine/masculine or straight/gay.”

Joel Baum & Kim Westheimer

tolerance.org



← Home

University_

← About us

Pride Network

← Vision and values

Creating a stronger and more inclusive environment

← Diversity

The Pride Network supports the inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) members of our community.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Widening access to university

What we do

Our aim is for all members of our community to feel supported and free to

Join our network

Current students



Share

Special Notice Concerning the Global COVID-19 Pandemic: For important updates on UCLA campus safety precautions and associated information from county, state, and federal public health officials, please visit [UCLA Covid-19](#), [Bruins Safe Online](#), and the CDC's [COVID-19 site](#).

we support



LGBTQ CHAMPIONS

MEET THE 40 UCLA HEALTH PROVIDERS WHO HAVE EARNED THE "LGBTQ CHAMPION" DISTINCTION.



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committees and Networks

Committees and Social Networks

50:50 Gender Equality Group

Inclusion Leads

Enable@UCL

Friends of Out@UCL

LGBTQ+ Equality Advisory Group

Male Allies Network

Out@UCL

Parents and Carers Together

Race Equality Steering Group

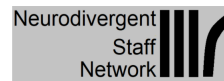
Inclusion Groups and Social Networks available at UCL



Disability Equality Steering Group



Enable@UCL



Neurodivergent Staff Network



LGBTQ+ Advisory Group



Out@UCL



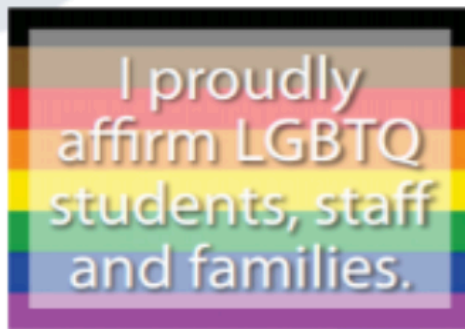
Friends of Out@UCL

Next Steps

- Review Resources / Share Resources
 - ISCA Lesson Share Project
- Update Your Pronouns on Email, Social Media Etc.
- Print the following Poster in Support
- Continue the Conversations

**Do You Need
Support?**

ASK ME!



Show Your LGBTQ+ Support **With This Downloadable Sign**

Download and print this poster and display it in your office or home to show support for LGBTQ+ students, staff, and families. Visuals like these help LGBTQ+ students identify trusting adults to turn to and improve feelings of safety and connectedness.

[American Counseling Association](#)

Join us for Small Group Discussions -- June 25th



Breakout Room #	Article / Webinar / Podcast	Facilitator
1	Podcast: Unlocking Us: Brené Brown with Ibram X. Kendi on How to Be an Antiracist	Christina McDade
2	Article: Open Letter to International Schools	Kathy Manu and Yvette Cuenco
3	Webinar: CASEL CARES: Owning Your Power to Raise Kids Who Challenge Racism	Jen Hammonds
4	Article: Your Black Colleagues May Look Like They're Okay, But They're Not	Elizabeth Mohr and Andrew Palmer
5	Article : Helping Children Cope After a Traumatic Event	Chrystal Kelly and Lynn Kogelmann
6	Article: White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack Peggy McIntosh	Ryan Haynes and Adam Karsten

Thank you to our presenters!

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United in Diversity

Thank you for attending today.

Any questions? Email us info@iscainfo.com