

# Gay OK Youth Teams

*Guide for youth teams that promote pleasant manners and a safe coming-out*



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Gay OK Youth teams: manual

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## What is a Gay OK team?

What is a Gay OK team? A Gay OK team is a group of students who contribute to the acceptance of sexual diversity\* in schools, and tackle this in a systematic way.

Many schools do not know how to make the situation around sexual diversity open and respectful. LGBTI\*\* organizations often try to achieve this through visibility and information. We know from research that visibility works well in schools where people are already reasonably open, but in schools where people are rather negative, it can lead to more insecurity. Most young people do not know what you can do in addition to visibility and information. The idea for Gay OK teams has arisen to help young people go a step further.

From science we can conclude that they work well and we have set up a quiz. But because each school is different, you can't make a standard recipe. To really change the school, you must do two things: make a plan that suits your school, and make the people who can implement the plan enthusiastic to do so.

To write this manual, we have experimented in several schools. It turns out that it makes a difference whether you are in a VMBO, a HAVO or a VWO; if there are only straight youth in your group, or many LGBTI youth who have come out of the closet; and whether you organize it as a young person or as a teacher that takes the lead. In this manual we give tips for these different situations. We write this guide for young people, because we want to support their initiatives.

Good luck with your Gay Ok team!

\* Sexual diversity: straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, asexual, queer and more: all forms of sexual preference and gender identity (boys, girls or otherwise)

\*\* LGBTI: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex

## How do you start a Gay OK team?

First, you must get a group of students together. You can do this in different ways.

If you are on a student board, during a meeting with other pupils you can propose to set up a "Gay Ok" (or a different name) workgroup and have everyone agree to it. If you are in a GSA, you can get it started with the GSA or set up a sub-group that will do this project. If you don't belong to a GSA, you can – perhaps together with one or a few teachers and a school leader – recruit young people for a group. To make recruitment easier, we have created a text that you can use for a brochure. You can adjust it yourself and design it in a nice way. You can copy and distribute many them, or have them mailed to the students as a PDF via the school management.

If you have composed a group, the project can start. This consists of the following steps:

1. Acquaintance and business appointments
2. Workshop 1: sexual diversity
3. Workshop 2: School change
4. Survey in 6 classes
5. School visitation
6. Consult with school management
7. Monitor the execution of plans and anchoring

These steps are explained in the rest of this manual.

## Step 1: Introduction and consultation about appointments

Find out who you need to carry out this project. These are usually:

- The students
- One or a few teachers or a coordinator (care coordinator, safety coordinator)
- The school leader
- External supervisor(s)

It may be that you do not get everyone together in the first conversations. That is not bad. But keep in mind that all these individuals have a role somewhere in the project and should be involved. If they are not already involved in advance, they will not be able to participate or even inspect the project on closer look. You can avoid this by involving everyone from the start or at least informing them.

Everyone has their own role and feelings in and about this project. It is important to take this into account.

### Students

If you as a student take the initiative for this project, you must make sure that you find at least four other pupils who want to carry out the project with you. Everyone is always busy, and the project can take some time, so it is significant to convince others that it is a fun and important project that you really want to finish together.

According to the pilots of this project, it is possible that the attention of your fellow students will return to something else after some time, which will cause the project to stop running smoothly. That's a shame. You can reduce this risk by talking about this with other students in advance and agree on finishing it together.

If a teacher, the school leader, or an external supervisor takes the initiative for this project, students must be sought. Then the framework for the project must be decided.

If there is a student board, you can ask the council if they find this project interesting and want to implement it. Then the Gay OK Team becomes a working group of the student council. The recommendations can be taken over by the student council and if they are then discussed with the school leader, they have a higher legal status than any other group. The submission and implementation of the recommendations is therefore through the formal procedure of the Participation Council. This may be more complicated, but it gives you more formal power.

If there is a GSA, the GSA supervisor can ask the members if they think the project is nice. As already mentioned, you must make sure that the GSA members really want to do and persevere through the project

If there is no student board or GSA yet, you must set up a group yourself. If your idea is to set up a GSA, you should first get together with many sexually diverse students. Often, young people first want to talk about themselves and then they can later focus on things that can change the school. If you want to set up a group focused on change with both LGBTI and cisgender (non-transgender) straight students, it may be good to center the school visit around tolerance in a broader sense. This will make it easier to get straight students involved. Be sure to make agreements about how to deal with each other in the group. Students with different experiences can easily hurt each other when it comes to sexuality and relationships.

## **Teachers**

In some schools, a teacher may want to use the Gay OK project to start-up a GSA group. They can get the approval of school management with the argument that the visitation fulfills three legal obligations: student participation, implementation of the safety plan (Safety at School), the interpretation of the mandatory information on sexual diversity (core objectives), and that it is a good form of education. If you want to follow this path as a teacher, you must consider that your wish to set up a GSA may not be directly in line with the wishes of the students. The school visit is "externally" focused on school improvement. This works best with students who want the attention for school improvement.

But if the GSA students are primarily concerned with discovering their own feelings and their self or how they should deal with reactions from other pupils and adults (focused on their immediate environment), then they may not be ready for a discussion that is externally centered on a broader and not so easily influenced environment. In the pilots, we have noticed that "beginner" GSA students in the project are much more occupied with themselves. They are not really interested in planning effective change, but only on interventions that support their own discovery process. For example, this can be seen in activities where they do not have to interact with people who are less tolerant or provide information about themselves (gay, lesbian, bisexual, straight, bi-curious, transgender, transsexual, intersex, queer, questioning, gender queer, polyamorous, asexual, demi-sexual, cisgender, gender-fluid, pansexual, transvestite). This type of education often does not result in tolerance because the students are only focused on discussion of self-discovery. It is therefore important for the GSA supervisor to meet the needs of the students. Offering a safe place for students to discover their feelings about self-discovery without rejection, and teaching them how to cope with real reactions from other pupils and adults is necessary for a productive school visit.

### **Coordinator**

The Safety at School Act requires every school to have a safety coordinator. Sometimes this is combined with a care coordinator who often already consults with the care team. Such a coordinator must ensure that the school visit is scheduled in the roster and that the results will eventually become school policy through the regular process.

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<sup>1</sup> For a complete list of labels and related concepts, see

<http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2013/01/a-comprehensive-list-of-lgbtq-term-definitions/#sthash.mi5gzbjg.dpbs>

## **School Leader**

The school leader who is ultimately responsible must give permission for the project and know what is going on. They can ensure that students are allowed to work for the Gay OK Team during school hours. In some schools, students can do this project as a social internship. And they can designate supportive teachers who are willing to use their paid hours for the project. School leaders often find the project fun and useful. Since the beginning of 2017, schools are legally obliged to ensure student participation. School leaders see this project as an opportunity to fulfil this obligation.

But school leaders often have two questions. First, they wonder what recommendations are suggested for the project. They worry that students will suggest recommendations they do not want or cannot do and they question how to deal with them. The answer is that the students formulate recommendations, but they know that the director is ultimately responsible and has the final say in any decision. If this is explained correctly, then it is not a problem.

Secondly, the school leaders are aware that recommendations are meant to improve things and there will probably be criticism from the school visit. They wonder how students and possible external attendants deal with this. Will the criticism appear in the newspaper or social media, risking the image of the school? In principle, the interested parties promise that the results of the school visitation will not be shared with any outside sources. If fun and productive things happen, then there can be consultation between the school leader and Gay Ok Team to share the information with the public.

## **Make an appointment**

Determine a date to get acquainted and make agreements with those involved about the project. You can send people the folder(s) in advance and make it clear that the conversation is meant to:

- produce knowledge
- discuss if one wants to work with the project
- make agreements about the project

An appointment with students and the school management is best done at the end of the day.

[You can find a model for an agenda and an appointment list here.](#)

[Model for an article on the website or in the newsletter](#)

[Model for a letter to parents about the research](#)

## Step 2: Workshop 1 on sexual diversity

Not everyone knows about sexual diversity. Certainly, few heterosexuals know about sexual diversity, but LGBTI+ students also have different levels of knowledge. During the first workshop, we implement a quiz to ensure everyone is on the same level and then discuss our opinions. The workshop takes at least one hour, but is more effective if it is 1.5 or 2 hours.

### Information and discussion

If you work with a group of LGBTI+ youth, use this quiz primarily to start discussion. The quiz has information, but the purpose of this it is to change minds. LGBTI+ youth may already have more knowledge and opinions on concepts and terms. It is also interesting to discuss how to deal with LGBTI+ issues.

The quiz focuses more on information when the young people do not know much about sexual diversity, but it is important that there is also discussion about the topic.

### Knowledge questions

The quiz questions can be found at the end of this document in the Attachment section, or you can visit the EduDivers [website to download the powerpoint presentation](#). The first quiz questions are about the definitions of LGBTI. Those are facts, but everyone also has a sense of words like "gay ", "lesbian ", "bi ", or "queer ". If you're straight, you might find some words neutral, or objectionable. If you self-identify as LGBT or I, you also make a choice. For example, you choose whether to mention "lesbian ", "bi ", "queer " or something else and can talk about this during this quiz. That way you will get to know each other and you can work better together in this project.

If you do this with a GSA, you must be careful not to get stuck with these questions. If the participants do not stop talking about their feelings and self-esteem, it may be a sign that they are not yet ready for the Gay OK project as they are still too busy with themselves.

### **Questions on phobia and tolerance**

The second part of the quiz deals with concepts such as "tolerance", "acceptance" and various forms of LGBTI phobia.

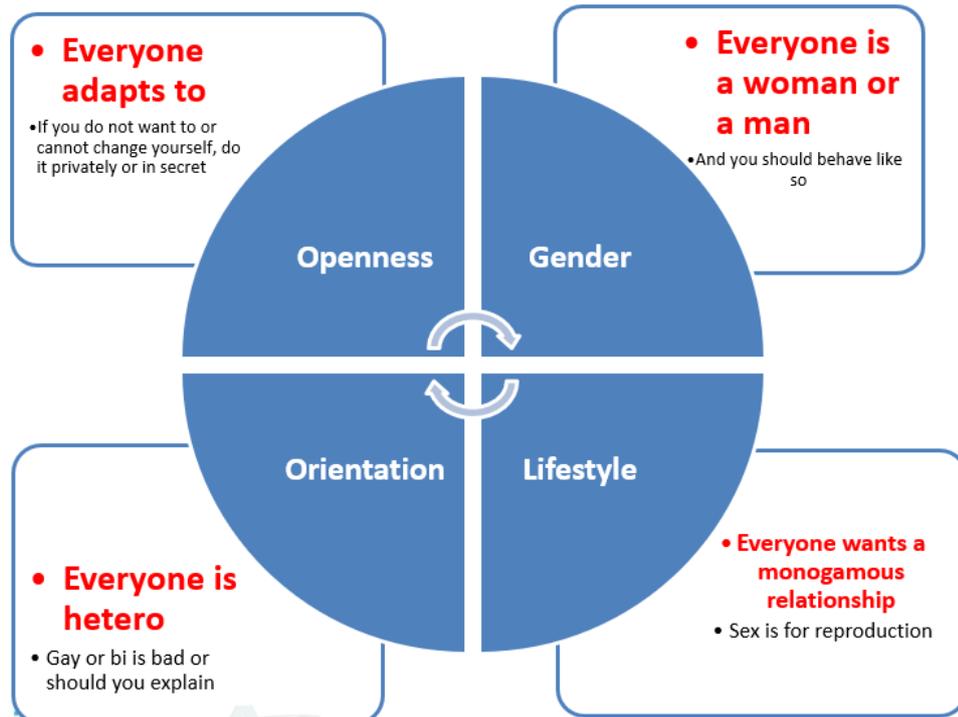
Many people feel uncomfortable when other people deviate from what they expect or what they think is "normal". "Normal" actually means "according to my own norms". Pay attention! Many people mix norms and values. "Norms" are minimum requirements for how we live together. "Values" are opinions and feelings of someone or a group. In a democratic society, there are always many different values because only in a dictatorship everyone must think the same. In a democratic, open, and friendly school climate, there is a lot of tolerance for various values. Tolerance does not mean that you agree with everything, but that you give space to other opinions and feelings. Therefore, you do not impose any norms on each other if they are not necessary for cooperation.

Not only heterosexual students have to learn tolerance. Learning tolerance can also best prevent some LGBTI+ students from having trouble with the identity expression of others, not understanding their choices, or being unsure or angry. In the discussion, try to get everyone to deal with such feelings. It is important for everyone's acceptance to try to understand each other. Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb once said: if you want others to not discriminate against you, do not discriminate against others. He spoke to Muslim youth, but his advice applies, of course, to everyone.

### **Discussion on heteronormativity**

Both hetero- and LGBTI + youth sometimes find it irritating when other young people have different norms as they do in terms of sexuality or gender (boys / girls). Many of these norms belong to what we call the "norm of heterosexuality", or simply the "hetero norm". In the diagram below we have summarized the most important standards and expectations in the context of the hetero norm.

# NORMAL



If you can make a conversation about this, try to find out what moves people in the discussion. If you understand why people are anxious, angry, proud or bothered, you become more understanding towards each other. Try to agree to be tolerant and promote tolerance and openness. Also agree on deviations from what you find "normal", but do not let that stand in the way of cooperation.

### Step 3: Workshop 2 on school change

The second workshop also lasts between 1 or 2 hours. You can do this workshop on the same date of the first, but make sure you have the time and split the workshops into two parts with a short break in the middle. The workshop consists of a short quiz, a card game with goals and methods, and a conclusion to introduce the school visit.

#### Myths of LGBT friendly schools

The workshop is about school change. The goal of the Gay OK team is to improve the school atmosphere, but how do you do that? Most people think that in an instance you can "make sexual diversity visible" and "provide information", but if and how does that exactly help? This is unknown.

In fact, there are a lot of biases about what works and what does not work, and that means that many schools take measures that are not extremely effective.

A common myth is that "visibility" leads to more tolerance or acceptance. It is logical that LGBTI think this, because they notice that most people do not want to talk about it (as it is "taboo") and so they think that making it more visible and "discussable" will break the taboo and will promote emancipation.

In reality, it is somewhat more complicated. In a safe environment it works: then visibility arouses curiosity and then people talk about it, making the theme more familiar and less strange or scary. But it does not work in a negative environment. Then visibility raises defensive responses and especially non-heteronormative visibility confirms the idea of biased people that stereotypes are correct and generally valid.

Another myth is that information is the best way to promote tolerance. This myth, too, probably stems from the idea that visibility and coming out are the best ways to promote freedom. In this vision, information in that focuses on LGBTI is the best and most effective method for tolerance. In practice, such information can result in various ways in different types of schools and classes. But more importantly, research shows that even the best-tested lessons and teaching packages never result in more than a 15% change in attitude or

behavior. Other methods, such as making agreements about good manners and keeping each other in line are much more effective. But they are also harder to implement successfully, because for that you must work together, dare to speak to each other, and be willing to face your mistakes.

A general rule seems to be that the most effective methods are more interactive and more confrontational. However, people often choose more superficial and less effective methods, simply because they find the more effective methods too difficult or troublesome.

These are statements that many people do not like to hear. Some people do all sorts of activities and do not want to hear that the things they do are not so effective. Other people still do nothing, but do not want to hear that LGBT friendliness cannot be achieved through a few simple actions. And again, others want to do something themselves. But effective approaches are all about doing something together, even with people who initially do not like to work together. This means that the workshop "school change" is not only about conveying information about effective methods, but also about overcoming fear, resistance to unwanted information, and promoting the idea that things can be achieved by making smart choices while working together.

In the quiz we try to promote this awareness and reduce resistance through some playful questions and a method game. We recommend that during the workshop you present the "facts" as neutral, as a kind of background, and then discuss how you can deal with them at school and which choices you can make.

### **The quiz**

[You can download the PowerPoint presentation of the quiz here.](#)

The first question from the quiz asks when the students feel safe. This is a kind of trick question, because the next question asks when they are safe. Research shows that there is a difference between feeling and being safe. [The SCP research on pilots regarding school policy on sexual diversity](#) (2014) shows that the correct answer is D: visibility. The LGBT students in these pilots indicated that they had a higher level of safety when they celebrated Purple Friday in COC education. In the same schools; however, it turned out that at the same

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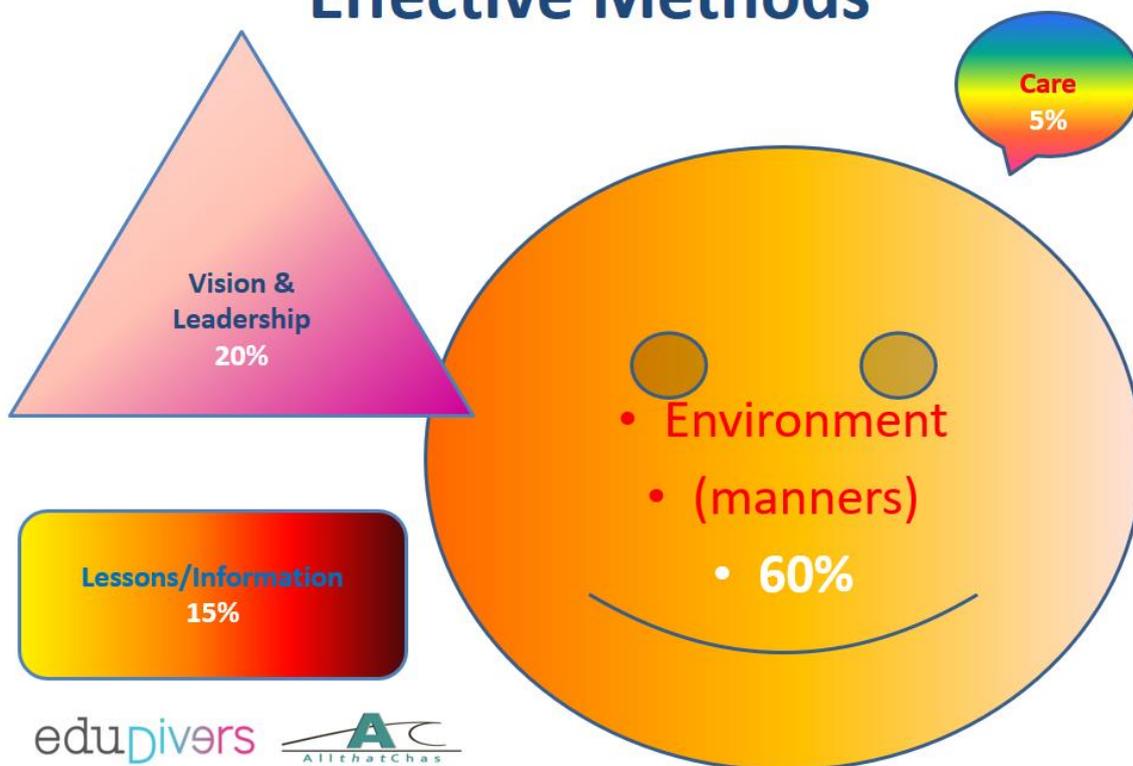
time being "gay" was being scolded, and there was more negative behavior about sexual diversity. How is that possible?

In the same pilots, it turned out that as schools took more and more measures, the security increased. The SCP does not go deep into what the "other" measures were. This was difficult because the pilots were not properly supervised and examined in terms of content, so that the measures taken were a bit of a mess.

Fortunately, EduDivers has done years of research into what works and how these measures are connected. This is summarized in a series of articles: you can find the bundled articles in the brochure "The science of respectfully dealing with sexual diversity". A summarized short video clip has also been made about it: [www.edudivers.nl/doelgericht](http://www.edudivers.nl/doelgericht).

In short, it means that agreements about maintaining manners have the greatest effect. You can strengthen this by supporting the behavioral policies, and information on student guidance which is implemented by school management. But then you must focus on manners and not on all kinds of substantive information and discussion about specific identities.

## Effective Methods



### The method game

How do you ensure that your school really becomes LGBT+ friendly? We also know that a combination of methods works better than just doing one thing. We know that the best approach is always a combination of methods, and that this combination must suit your school. So, every school must make its own recipe. This game was created to help in making choices for the methods.

For the game you need the following things:

1. A set of goal cards (see attachments)
2. A set of method cards (see attachment) and blank method cards
3. A map of a continuous learning path
4. Red and green post-its

The goal cards each give a concrete goal.

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The method cards each describe a method. On each card you can see what the method is called, what purpose it connects to, as well as where and when you use it. The card gives two scores: how effective the method is, and how easy it is. You can fill in a method yourself on the blank cards.

### Model for learning path and associated policy

Boxes ⇨ Flanking policy  Years/period ⇩	Biology, health science, geography	Citizenship, mentorship, internship	English, other languages	Physics, mathematics, etc.	<b>Policy:</b> vision, communication, measures, regulations, school design (not per semester)	<b>Care:</b> Dealing with coming-out, transition, LHBT + reception, referral, homophobic care Pupils (not per semester)
1 <sup>st</sup> class, 1 <sup>st</sup> semester	<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>					
1 <sup>st</sup> class, 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester		<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>				
2 <sup>nd</sup> class, 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester			<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>			
2 <sup>nd</sup> class, 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester				<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>		
3 <sup>rd</sup> class, 1 <sup>st</sup> semester			<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>			
3 <sup>rd</sup> class, 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester		<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>				
4 <sup>th</sup> class, 1 <sup>st</sup> semester	<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>					
4 <sup>th</sup> class, 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester		<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>				
5 <sup>th</sup> class, 1 <sup>st</sup> semester			<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>			
5 <sup>th</sup> class, 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester				<u>Goals -&gt; Methods</u>		

The plan for the learning line consists of an overview of all subjects and all years of study, and provides space for methods for self-examination, policy, measures for school environment and for student care. You will also find a model for the learning path in the attachments. These can be resized on a flap or two flaps that are glued together.

With the colored post-its you can put positive or negative experiences or opinions with the methods.

The game proceeds as follows:

1. Divide the goals cards and have the students look through them. Then you discuss which goals belong in which school year and in which period of the school year. Ask the participants how the goals will be reached. Not all goals need to be used.

It may be that the participants find it difficult. Planning goals is simply an art. If you cannot figure it out yourself, then the educationalist Krathwohl gives the advice to build goals in 5 steps/phases:

**Krathwohl's Five Steps for Achieving Goals:**

1. Getting attention: especially if there is resistance to a theme; first get attention with something that interests them, then shift attention to (sexual) diversity. In many cases you use tools such as videos and interactive exercises that generate interest.
2. Generating curiosity (for sexual diversity itself): connecting things that really appeal to students with interesting questions and dilemmas about sexual diversity. You mainly do this with discussions about similar dilemmas (belief and choice, how you want a relationship, how to deal with discrimination).
3. Forming opinions: forming a neutral or positive opinion about how to deal with sexual diversity, even if one feels that it is bad, weird or different. You do this mainly with exercises about feeling (that no one wants to be excluded) and dialogue discussions in which you exchange experiences and learn to understand each other.
4. Adapting your value system to your new opinion: if you change one opinion, you also must adjust all your values around similar themes. After all, your opinion about homosexuality or transsexuality is only a part of your whole pattern of values, and how you compare yourself to the norm of heterosexuality. You can do this by having discussions and exercises on how you relate to ideologies, beliefs, culture and philosophies, and how you deal with your own and other people's different opinions.
5. Characterization: You learn to feel comfortable with your new choices, even if others have difficulty with it. Learning to consistently promote positive opinions and visions. You can do this by participating in role-playing games in which you confront each other with specific situations: what do you do when you see gay people, if your best friend or your child turns out to be gay, lesbian, bi, trans or intersex, ect. These role-playing games serve as skill exercises to learn how to be strong yet polite while being understanding and open.

2. Hand out the method cards and ask the participants to sort them with the chosen goals. Discuss with each other whether the choices are right. One may also write new methods on the blank cards and add them. Each participant is allowed to indicate with green or red post-its whether they see advantages or disadvantages with certain methods.
3. If all goes well, there are now multiple methods for each goal. Choose together which methods are best, and which methods seem less suitable and can be removed. At the end of this exercise you will have an overview of a possible learning path and an associated policy.

Although you already have a kind of blueprint for a theoretically ideal LGBT+ friendly school, the exercise is primarily intended as a learning experience with more systematic thinking

about goals and methods. With the school visit, we get a more concrete view of what really works at the school and we can transfer the conclusions based on this to other methods.

4. Finish the workshop with a preview of the school visit, the next part of the project.

## Step 4: The survey

To know what you can do about the acceptance of sexual and gender diversity, it is necessary to get a good idea of how it stands at your school. Schools differ very strongly in what is and is not accepted. Therefore, a survey is first conducted among the students. This has been developed by EduDivers and AllthatChas, is scientifically founded and therefore gives a truly reliable picture of your school.

It is good to inform parents and to request their permission before you start researching. [You can find a model letter for how you can do this here.](#)

### How many students?

It is possible to have the questionnaire filled in by all students. This gives the most complete and reliable results, but it is also possible that the school management believes that the students would invest too much time in the survey. So, you can also question a part of the school. We prefer to see about 6 classes or about 250 students. At least about 100 students should complete the questionnaire. A little less is not terrible, but less than 50 is too little to make a meaningful report.

It is important that you survey as many different groups of students as possible from the school. So, try to question at least one from each grade. If there are different directions within the school, it would be good to have students from all directions fill out the questionnaire.

### What and how?

The survey is a digital questionnaire that you can take on a computer. The table below shows what the questions are about, with examples. It is made with 'Google forms' and is free to use. To access the questionnaire and the dates, you can contact Charles Picavet, [charles@allthatchas.nl](mailto:charles@allthatchas.nl). Charles is a researcher and has already taken this questionnaire several times. He can then ensure that the questionnaire is made available for your school. If necessary, you can also choose to use only part of the questionnaire, but we do not recommend it.

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It works best when the questionnaire is completed during a lesson. Then you know for sure that (almost) everyone completes the list. This is possible, for example, during a mentoring session, but can also be done in other lessons. Discuss this with the school management, so you do not have to arrange it yourself with individual teachers. It is nice if teachers find this to be important, because then they are easier to work with. Filling in is easy within a lesson.

### The questionnaire

Subjects	Sample questions
1. Background data	Gender, age, religion and the like.
2. Self confidence	I think I do not have much to be proud of.
3. Satisfaction with your own body	I am satisfied with my face.
4. Dealing with peer pressure	I often do something like this, even though I don't like it.
5. Ethnic Identity	I am glad that I am a member of the ethnic group I belong to.
6. Experiences with being the victim of (cyber) bullying	Have you received an email or an app message in the last 30 days that made you very angry with someone you know?
7. Experiences with (cyber) bullying another individual	Have you sent someone online a text message or app in the past 30 days to make them angry or fooled?
8. Dealing with conflicts	If someone is annoying to me, my classmates stand up for me.
9. Possibilities for coming-out	If a boy or girl at my school is gay or lesbian, I think the person could tell the school.
10. Acceptance of ethnic background	I would certainly be friends with him/her.
11. Acceptance of transgender students	Idem
12. Acceptance of homosexual students	Idem
13. Views about gender	It bothers me when a boy behaves like a girl.
14. Homonegativity	I find it dirty when two girls kiss each other.
15. Reaction to homonegativity	Suppose a boy says he is gay. [...] Problems arise in the classroom. What would you do in such a case?

### And then?

If the questionnaire has been withdrawn, you can view the results in Google yourself. It is also possible to download a data file for further analysis. Because this is rather complicated, it goes too far to describe this in the manual. For this you can also contact Charles. He can carry out the analysis for you or help you to do that yourself.

### **Alternative**

Alternatively, you can use the questionnaire that is also used as an interview list from the school site. This form is available as an Excel form: if you fill in the results yourself or create a Google form and questionnaire based on these questions, you can calculate the results yourself and show them in clear diagrams. However, these questions are not as scientifically justified as those in the other questionnaire.

## Step 5: The school visit

During the school visit, in one day we determine the main problems that the Gay OK team wants to fix and finds possible solutions. For this, students should be exempted from school for that day. It is also possible to do the two sessions separately from each other. However, the second meeting must not be more than one week after the first, because otherwise everything from the first meeting will be forgotten.

After mapping what students think about the school in terms of sexual diversity, it is necessary to have a good exchange of ideas. The results of the survey consist mainly of percentages. Not everyone interprets the same. Moreover, it gives a lot of insight as the percentages can be supplemented with experiences of yourselves. The school analysis is meant for this and there is a morning time for this. In the afternoon, you can then think about solutions to the problems that arise.

### The morning-analysis phase

The morning consists of three parts:

- Discussion
- Interviews
- Prioritizing

#### Discussion

First, we openly discuss openly situation at school. Do you think it is possible to come out of the closet at school? Are there students being bullied and to what extent does sexual diversity play a role in this? How do the teachers and school management deal with this? It is best if you can discuss examples of what is good and what goes wrong. If you think it is difficult to come out of the closet, for example, that is a feeling or you know of examples in your own environment. It is not the intention to gossip about fellow students or teachers, so it is not necessary to mention names. For this first discussion, you can take a maximum of one hour.

Then it's time to review the results of the survey and talk about it. Do the findings fit in with what you expected or not? Do this in up to half an hour.

## **Interviews**

Interviews are conducted after the results have been discussed. This is done based on a [short list of 14 closed questions and 3 open questions.](#)

Interviewing can be done individually or in pairs. It is important to interview the interviewees as individuals rather than as a group so that you receive personalized responses.

The opinions and ideas of teachers have not yet been recorded, so they could also be interviewed. It is also good to do interviews with pupils who are not knowledgeable about stupid sexual diversity or have negative thoughts about it. The interviews only last for a short time. Ideally, this could take place during a break, if students and teachers are available who happen to have an intermediate hour, but with the permission of the school management you can also get a pupil out of the classroom here and there (arrange this in advance with the school management).

Spend no more than half an hour on the interviews and another half an hour to discuss them: does it give new insights and additions to everything that has been said before?

## **Prioritizing**

Then priorities must be set. Give everyone three yellow and three blue post-it stickers (or of course other colors too). Write on the yellow stickers things that you like about the school and on the blue stickers things that you think should be improved. Stick it on a flip chart (yellow top and blue bottom) and try to group the stickers together with the other students. In the end you get an overview of the most important positive and improvement points.

Go through the points and decide together whether you think the same things are most important. Many points will overlap.

Based on this you can identify up to three problems that are most important to resolve. These must be wide-ranging difficulties that can easily be solved and may work as a "lever "

to address the remainder (later). In the afternoon we will focus on these three problems. This last part of the morning program should take up to half an hour.

### **The afternoon-recommendation phase**

After the situation of sexual diversity at your school is well analyzed, it is time to think about solutions. In the quiz and the method game you have already got an idea about what is necessary and possible. You understand that it is not enough to provide only information, but that it is especially necessary to work on manners. During this afternoon a list is made of what can be done about the most important problems that were identified during the morning.

The afternoon consists of two or three parts:

- Transferring points of improvement into actions
- Elaboration to form a continuous learning path (possibly)
- First reaction of school leader

### **Translating points for improvements into actions**

We do this based on the DOEL scheme. DOEL stands for the four pillars of good school policy: Making a **D**agnosis and setting a goal, making the **O**rganization safe and inviting to learn, organizing **E**ducation, and student **L**earning. A good school policy consists of measures or action in each of these areas, and the various actions must also be compatible.

You look at the brainstorming points for improvement, and then you start thinking about measures and actions. You can use the purpose cards and method cards from the second workshop if you want to, but you can also think of something yourself or search on the websites [www.edudivers.nl](http://www.edudivers.nl), [www.gayandschool.nl](http://www.gayandschool.nl) and [www.sense.info](http://www.sense.info) (sex education).

In this phase you can also think about what you want to do as a Gay OK team, and what should be done by others. If you want to go very far, you can assign names or functions of possible implementers to all tasks yourself. But beware: that is officially the task of the school manager.

### **Elaboration to form a continuous learning path**

You can summarize the suggestions in the DOEL schema. If you want to give a lot of attention to education, you can possibly get the schedule of the continuous learning path from Workshop 2 and fill it out again.

In a learning path, emphasize the main line and the meaning of it. If you will soon be presenting the school leader with a learning path that looks like a Christmas tree with 50 forms of every conceivable lesson, but it is not apparent that these things have something to do with each other, you give the impression that a lot must be done, but that you have no idea of any priorities or logic. For example, if you want to focus on sexual diversity in mathematics, you must have a good argument why that will work right there and how you think the math teachers are going to help. This is a somewhat exaggerated example.

In most cases you will mainly concentrate on biology (sex education, transsexuality, intersex), health (social and sexual education), social studies (respect, human rights, discrimination), citizenship (respect, identity, rights, self-development) and language (learning to listen, argue, discussion skills).

### **First reaction of the school leader**

If you are satisfied, get the school leader at the end of the day, and present what you have done and your recommendations. Ask the school leader to ask questions and answer them.

You can also ask for an initial response, but don't expect the school leader to say: "Yes! We're going to do that! ". A good school leader first thinks about which recommendations can work well and how you can introduce them, and then the school leader will first want to consult with the team or perhaps with the board or the MR (Participation Council).

If you have not already done so, it is useful to meet now about when you can consult with the school leader about their intentions.

## **Step 6: Follow-up consultation with school management**

The Gay OK team will never be able to implement all recommendations by itself. You need others, and the school leader is the head of all others. So, it is very important to talk with the school leader about how it wants to accept the recommendations and have them implemented.

During the follow-up meeting it is important to not only discuss what is not working. The school management especially likes to hear what is going well. There is usually enough to be proud of the school! So always start positive discussion about what is going well. Do not discuss the other points as things that are "bad" but as points for further improvement.

You can illustrate these points for improvement with findings from the survey or stories that you have heard from others during the interviews. Focus on the three most important problems, otherwise you will need a long time and then you will lose their attention. You can state that there are other things, but that you think this is the most important thing that needs to be done.

And then you present the solutions that you have come up with. If you use and explain the DOEL scheme, you will make a big impression, as they will notice that you have some understanding of how a school works. A detailed suggestion for a continuous learning path with exercises and attention to different lessons will also give the impression that you have thought about it.

Finally, the school management must be able to respond to the results of your work. Above all, it will have to be about the thought-out solutions. Does the school management want to cooperate? What can you do as students and what do you need for that? And what plans should the school management or lecturers implement? If all goes well, the meeting will result in the school management's motivation to do something about the situation of LGBTI students and agreements will be made for the follow-up appointments.

## Step 7: Monitoring execution plans and grounding

After the follow-up conversation with the school leader, it is useful to make a short overview like this:

Action	Who	Execution/ deadline	How to implement and recommendation
Discussing Manners	All mentors, coordinated by mentoring consultation	First week of the school year	Has happened but many teachers found it difficult, training needed
Technical explanations of homosexuality, transsexualism, and intersex in biology	Biology teachers, coordinated by biology section	1 <sup>st</sup> grade sexuality lessons from the book, March	Gay OK team has made a fact sheet that connects to the book and discusses the head section. All teachers were asked if they had done it. They have done it one by one.
Discussion on sexual self-identity	All mentors, coordinated by citizenship classes, with presentation by Gay OK students	3rd grade identity and human rights lessons, April	Gay OK students have prepared presentation and with the help of EduDivers, made the lesson more interactive. Most lessons went well but in 3A they laughed and scolded. Lecturer did not know what to do and could only prohibit laughing  <i>Next year discuss with experts what we do with such difficult class/students</i>

This way you can keep track of which recommendations should be carried out and by whom. As a Gay OK team, you can keep track of whether the recommendations are implemented and how. You can also keep track of what can be further improved due to the experience of the current project. You can discuss this with school management.

## Finally

This manual is written for students to be able to carry out the project without much support. For some things; however, support is needed.

The school management or teachers can help to get a group of students together or to have them do things for the project during class time. During their lessons, lecturers can also provide students with the opportunity to take the survey, for example, or pay attention to the project. Furthermore, the school management is important for the implementation of plans. They can make things possible, for example by making time or money available for the plans. They will probably also have to work themselves, for example, to make a policy about what is and what is not allowed at school.

It is also possible to call in external support, with EduDivers or All that Chas. EduDivers is especially useful when making plans because they have a lot of experience in improving LGBTI acceptance in schools. All that Chas is particularly good at research and can help with the survey and the interviews. In any case, it will be necessary to let All that Chas help with putting the questionnaire online and the analysis of the survey

It is also possible to call in the help of other organizations to carry out the plans you make. Do as much as possible by yourself, as that is the best part, but sometimes others can help you. You can think of theater groups that perform around the theme of sexual diversity. Or if movies are made, it can also be useful to hire an expert. The COC often also offers the opportunity to provide information at school.

## **Attachments**

The attachments have not been translated in English. If you are interested, you can find them online in Dutch as MS Word or MS PowerPoint versions. Which you can translate with Google and edit. Like this manual, all attachments are copyrighted by EduDivers and AllthatChas and may not be reproduced without permission except for personal use by a Gay OK team.

[Gay OK folder for students \(MS Word\)](#)

[Gay OK folder for the school leader/supervisor \(MS Word\)](#)

[Agenda for startup meeting with school management \(MS Word\)](#)

[Model for an article on the website or in the newsletter \(MS Word\)](#)

[Model letter to parents about the research \(MS Word\)](#)

[Sexual diversity quiz \(PowerPoint\)](#)

[Quiz on school change \(PowerPoint\)](#)

[Model for learning path and policy \(MS Word\)](#)

[Interview questions and scoring form \(MS Excel\)](#)

[Certificate \(MS Word\)](#)

## Colophon

Dankmeijer, Peter; Picavet, Charles (2017). Gay OK youth teams. Manual for youth teams that promote pleasant manners and a safe coming-out.

Amsterdam: EduDivers/AllthatChas

This manual can be downloaded for free from:

<https://www.gale.info/doc/gale-products/GALE-2018-Gay-OK-Youth-Teams.pdf>

The original Dutch version can be downloaded from:

<https://www.edudivers.nl/doc/schoolvisitatie/Gay-OK-jongereenteams-gids.pdf>

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