

Rainbows in Schools

Parents and teachers working towards inclusion for rainbow students and families

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Dear School Leadership,

May 17th is IDAHOBIT, which is the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia.

Even with most students learning from home, there are still lots of great ways that schools can use IDAHOBIT as an opportunity to show their support for LGBTQIA+ students, families and teachers, and to revisit important discussions around embracing and respecting diversity and preventing bias-based bullying.

You may be all over this, with some great ideas about engaging students and families in these discussions, but just in case this has been missed in the chaos that is teaching in 2020, here are some simple ideas.

Communicate the school's position to students and families.

Homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and intersex-phobia are unfortunately commonplace in Australian schools and need constant attending to. IDAHOBIT is a perfect time for schools to remind families and students about the school's policies regarding respect for sexual and gender diversity, and prevention of bias-based bullying.

Invite parents/caregivers to have discussions with kids about respect for gender and sexual diversity, and about homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

Tv, movies and books can be great stepping off points for conversations, so you could suggest that families might like to watch and discuss **First Day**, a 4-part miniseries by ABCME, currently available on ABC iview. First Day is about a 12-year-old transgender girl, who must manage all the usual challenges of starting high school, in addition to the challenges of being transgender.

Students can show their support for their LGBTQIA+ classmates by making posters or rainbow flags.

These could be hung in front windows at home, or electronically submitted and made into virtual classroom display.

There are many resources available for teaching sexual and gender diversity to primary school students. For some suggestions, check out www.Rainbowsinschools.org.

Can you imagine the difference that these actions could make in the lives of the school's LGBTQIA+ community members?

Yours,