

## Resources Available

- Workshops for teachers and parents.
- Bi-monthly Newsletter
- Videos, DVDs and teaching materials available for loan.
- Community-building events (Pot-lucks, Coffee Hours, Teachers Teas, etc.).
- Discussion groups for children from LGBT families.
- Film and Discussion Series.
- Anti-Bullying Workshops and Materials.
- LGBT Resource Kits and Gender Resources Notebooks for every Cambridge Public School Library.

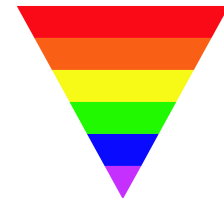
Melody Brazo, the *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Family Liaison*, works through Welcoming Schools to increase understanding and rapport between children and adults from all family backgrounds, by serving as a resource for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender families and allies, as well as for administrators and teachers in the Cambridge Public Schools.

## Cambridge Public Schools Non-Discrimination Policy

The Cambridge Public Schools has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, physical ability or age are not tolerated, and where any form of intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others and interferes with their freedom to learn or work is unacceptable.

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# Welcoming Schools Cambridge



Supporting Safe and  
Affirming Schools  
for Lesbian, Gay,  
Bisexual and  
Transgender Families  
and Youth in the  
Cambridge Public  
Schools.

When those who have the power to name and to socially construct reality choose not to see you or hear you ... when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked in the mirror and saw nothing.

*Adrienne Rich, Blood, Bread and Poetry (1986).*



All parents want the best for their children. And research shows that students learn best when there is a strong connection between home and school. School is a place where learning must be the first priority, but for some students, worries about whether they will be welcomed and supported can take up so much emotional space that they become distracted and unable to focus on learning. That is why the Cambridge Public Schools are committed to supporting *safe* and *welcoming* schools for *all* students.

## Frequently Asked Questions About LGBT Issues and Schools

1. Why do we have to talk about these ideas with school children? Isn't this something that should be left for parents to discuss at home when and if they choose?

*All children need to have the reality of their lives recognized. Educators cannot always know which students in their classrooms have lesbian, gay or transgender family members, friends or neighbors, or who will grow up to take on these identities. Students need educators to provide a model of the world that reflects the true and wide variety of experience, and which encompasses many cultures, family constellations and identities.*

2. How can I reconcile my personal beliefs with my responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing classroom for all children?

*Acknowledging that homosexuality exists does not mean that you, personally, think it is okay. It is important for students to see adults model respectful and caring behavior towards all people, regardless of their own personal opinions.*

3. Will my child be discriminated against or unable to make friends because he or she is from a gay family?

*Gay, lesbian or transgender families may have experienced prejudice before they arrive in your classroom. All children need to feel welcomed and supported; to see their own reality reflected in the world around them and to be treated with respect and dignity. As educators, we cannot prevent our students from experiencing prejudice, but we can help them recognize it, name it and replace it with justice and equality.*

4. Will people think I'm going to grow up to be lesbian, gay or transgendered because my parents are?

*Research shows that children from LGBT families are no more likely to grow up to be LGBT, themselves, than children from "straight" families.*