

# Provide safe spaces, changing rooms and school trips

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Address immediate environmental, physical and social needs' from the Guide: [LGBTIQA+ students](#)

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**Includes:**

- Understand threats to wellbeing
  - Ask about experiences in PE and sport
  - Provide safe spaces and access to support
  - Make changing rooms safe
  - Inclusively design school trips
  - Useful resources
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Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Supporting LGBTIQ+ students](#)

Strategy: [Address immediate environmental, physical and social needs](#)

Suggestion: [Provide safe spaces, changing rooms and school trips](#)

Date

22 January 2019

Link

[www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/supporting-lgbtika-students/provide-safe-spaces-changing-rooms-and-school-trips](http://www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/supporting-lgbtika-students/provide-safe-spaces-changing-rooms-and-school-trips)

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## Understand threats to wellbeing

Many LGBTIQ+ students face challenging situations and have identified that they:

- ▲ have experienced verbal slurs relating to gender identity
- ▲ are worried about threats of physical harm or harassment
- ▲ feel uncomfortable getting changed in front of others
- ▲ are unable to access a space aligned to their gender identity
- ▲ “hold on” or have to travel longer distances to get to assigned safe spaces
- ▲ need to change in spaces with peers who have caused harassment.

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# Ask about experiences in PE and sport

LGBTIQ+ students can find sports and physical education classes particularly stressful.

Document findings and discuss with students ways to create more inclusive environments.

Many students:

- ▲▲ have negative experiences in physical education classes
- ▲▲ identify physical education classes as likely locations for homophobia and transphobia to be expressed
- ▲▲ experience verbal slurs
- ▲▲ experience incidents of physical abuse
- ▲▲ experience feelings of rejection due to their sexuality and gender identity
- ▲▲ are worried about discrimination from coaches
- ▲▲ are unable to access gender-neutral shower, toilets, and changing areas
- ▲▲ feel uncomfortable with gender-specific uniforms
- ▲▲ feel uncomfortable playing in a gender-specific sports team.

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# Provide safe spaces and access to support

Designate safe spaces within the school and ensure students know where they can immediately access support.

- ▲▲ library, staffroom, or identified classroom
- ▲▲ gender-neutral bathrooms and changing areas
- ▲▲ school medical centre
- ▲▲ peer support, such as queer-straight alliance groups or rainbow diversity groups
- ▲▲ supportive adults who are informed and knowledgeable
- ▲▲ school youth worker, counsellor, or nurse
- ▲▲ pastoral care staff
- ▲▲ supportive allies.

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## Make changing rooms safe

A student should be able to change clothes safely in a changing room, no matter who they are.

- Consult and work with students to identify and create safe spaces.
- Private changing spaces should be available, either within the changing room or in a private space or bathroom nearby.
- Have procedures in place for out-of-school sports or activities to ensure students have access to privacy and safety.

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## Inclusively design school trips



Source: [Adrit1](#)

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<https://pixabay.com/en/kid-swimming-pool-1401158/>

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Ask students about the support they might need on trips outside school.

Discuss preferred sleeping arrangements and changing room needs or situations that could be unsafe or embarrassing.

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## Useful resources

### Guide to supporting a student to affirm or transition gender identity at school

Read time: 9 min

Publisher: Education Services Australia

[Visit website](#)



### Safe space kit: Guide to being an ally to LGBT students

Read time: 61 min

Publisher: Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network

[Download PDF](#)



### Out on the fields

Read time: 6 min

Publisher: Out on the Fields 2015

[Download PDF](#)

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