



True Colours

Promoting safe and inclusive communities
for young people with diverse
sexuality and/or gender

Did you know?

National research shows that:

- 1 in 10 young people are same sex attracted
- More than a third of young people realise their sexual difference before puberty
- 61% of young people reported verbal abuse because of homophobia and 18% physical abuse
- The most common place of abuse was at school - 80%
- 37% of young people described their school as homophobic
- Rates of suicide and self harm for LGBTI* youth are up to 6 times higher than heterosexual peers

Source: Writing Themselves in 3 (Hillier et al, 2010, La Trobe University)
Don't Ask, Don't Tell (Dyson et al, 2003, La Trobe University)

*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual and Intersex

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UnitingCare West is committed to achieving justice, hope and opportunity for all, and works to support and empower in particular those most in need in the WA community. It is a not-for-profit community services organisation and part of the mission of the Uniting Church in Australia and UnitingCare national network.



Justice, Hope and Opportunity for all

How True Colours helps

Same sex attracted and gender diverse young people face a range of issues as they try to understand their sexuality and identity and how it impacts on relationships with friends and family.

This can be particularly difficult in rural and regional areas where access to reliable information and appropriate support networks may be limited.

True Colours is based in Bunbury and provides services to the south west region as follows:

- A social peer support group
- Information and current research
- Advocacy support services
- Referrals and links to allied agencies
- A range of quality resources including books and DVDs available for loan
- Workshops, training and professional development

For young people and families

- Inclusive social peer support group for young people between the age of 15 and 25 to promote a sense of safety and belonging
- Information, support and advocacy for young people (as well as their families and friends), who are exploring their sexuality and/or gender
- Referrals and links to allied youth and community support services
- Opportunities for young people to be involved in peer education, community development and other initiatives

For community, allied agencies and workplaces

Professional development, education and training offering the following topics tailored to requirements and timeframes:

- Sexuality, gender and identity
- Dealing with disclosures
- Language and labels
- Challenging beliefs, myths and stereotypes
- Impacts of homophobia and transphobia
- Supporting same sex attracted and gender diverse clients
- Creating LGBTI* friendly services

For schools

True Colours Safer Schools Project works collaboratively with high schools in the south west region to develop and implement effective strategies for challenging homophobia and bullying within the school environment and supporting same sex attracted and gender questioning students.

The strategies schools are engaging in include:

- Professional development for teachers and allied staff
- Student workshops
- Presentations to P&C groups
- Development of school policies and codes of conduct to address homophobic bullying
- Provision of quality resources and information to promote a safer school environment
- Understanding rights and obligations under the Equal Opportunity Act 1984

Discrimination, harassment, and the right to a safe, secure and welcoming place to be educated applies to all students including same sex attracted and gender diverse young people.

