How to find our presentation
Celebrate Diversity with LGBTQ Books

Beth Bruch & Paige Ysteboe
What do we mean by LGBTQ Books?

For the purpose of this presentation, we’re referring to books that feature well-developed characters who we might identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Agender, Asexual, Nonbinary, Genderfluid, Cross dressing, etc. The list goes on.

These books may or may not have been written by LGBTQIA+ people.
Reflecting diversity among LGBTQ people

When we say LGBTQIA+ folks it’s important to note we’re talking about people with varied intersectional identities.

The books whose covers appear below feature Latinx (←not a typo), Southeast Asian American, European, and African American LGBTQIA+ characters.
Why include LGBTQ Books?

It’s our job!

- There are young people who identify or who will identify as LGBTQIA in all of North Carolina’s communities; and there are young people with LGBTQIA family members in all of our communities.

- ALA Bill of Rights
  - Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves.

- NC School Library Media Coordinator Standards
  - Standard 2. School library media coordinators build a learning environment that meets the instructional needs of a diverse population of students. (continued - next slide)
NC School Library Media Coordinator Standards (continued)

- Standard 2 Element a. School library media coordinators establish a learning environment that facilitates access to resources and addresses the learning needs of all members of the school community. School library media coordinators create a welcoming and accessible physical space that facilitates active learning, promotes participation and collaboration and teamwork, and provides flexibility to accommodate multiple learning styles, 21st Century skills, and reading enjoyment. School library media coordinators incorporate a global view and multiculturalism in library services, programming, and collection development to meet the personal interests and learning needs of a diverse student population. They develop and implement strategies to remove barriers to open and equitable access to the library media center and its resources.
LGB Teen Health Outcomes

- 17.8% of LGB students report being raped vs. 5.4% of heterosexual students
- 34.2% of LGB students were bullied on school property vs. 18.8% of heterosexual students
- 42.8% of LGB students seriously considered attempting suicide vs. 14.8% of heterosexual students
- 29.4% actually attempted suicide vs. 6.4%

*Source: CDC Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Students’ Health qtd. in DeMauro*
Trans Health Outcomes

- 78% of students out as transgender in K-12 school reported that they had been harassed on the basis of their gender identity.
- 38% reported that the harassment escalated to physical assault.
- 15% experienced abuse so severe that they had to leave school to escape.

*Source: The US Transgender Survey qtd. in DeMauro*
Health Concerns for LGBTQ Young People

- Depression
- Suicide
- Violence committed against them
- HIV/AIDS
Keep in mind...

BEING LGBTQIA+ IS NOT THE ISSUE;
THE SOCIETY WE LIVE IN IS.
Interventions Help

LGBTQ students in schools with a GSA or a comprehensive anti-bullying policy experienced lower levels of anti-LGBTQ victimization.

Also, LGBTQ students with an LGBT-inclusive curriculum were more likely to report that their classmates were somewhat or very accepting of LGBTQ students (76 percent vs. 42 percent).

*Source: GLSEN National School Climate Survey qtd. in DeMauro
Ways To Be Intentionally Inclusive

- **Space**
  - What communicates welcomeness and inclusivity?
  - What barriers might exist?
  - What might you want to change?

- **Programming**
  - How do we let LGBTQIA+ youth know they’re welcome and valued in the library and in our schools?
  - How do we let everybody know LGBTQIA+ youth are welcome and valued in the library and in our schools?
  - How do we get our teachers on board?

- **Collections...** (We’ll get to this)
Getting Teachers Comfortable

We held a teacher book club that focused on books that featured diverse characters

- Each month had a different theme
- Teachers read from a list of books I picked out for each month
- Not just LGBTQIA+
- Topics included African-American characters, Latino characters, lesbian and gay characters, transgender characters, and characters with various disabilities.
- We had 15+ staff members who participated
Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) & Diversity Clubs

- If a school has any extracurricular clubs (Fellowship for Christian Athletes, etc.), then it is legally obligated to allow GSA clubs.
- Clubs should be student initiated & run. Students will be the best ambassadors and recruiters.
- GLSEN has fantastic resources for students and advisors on starting a GSA that range from proposing the club to Administration to meeting topics to mission statement ideas.
- We initially called our club the Gay-Straight Alliance, but changed to United to better address intersecting identities and broadly working towards a safer school environment. This helps reduce stigma (teasing by students, parents, & community), but reduces visibility.
More on Clubs

• “This student-led club is for everyone who wants to make SAHS and our broader community safer for people of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations and gender identities to live and learn. We will achieve this goal through supporting each other; creating fun, safe spaces; and advocating for ourselves and each other.”

• Being clear that you support LGBTQ students might help them know they can come to you as a potential advisor or adult ally. It might help to let administration know of your willingness to advise in case they are approached by students.

• Ground rules are your friend!
Sample Ground Rules

- New members are always welcome. Ms. _____’s baby is always welcome!
- Personal information shared in United stays in United. Membership is confidential. Don’t “out” people.
- Hate is verbal; hate is disrespectful. No hate at all.
- No one should feel unsafe or bullied in here.
- Everyone’s input is necessary.
- No peer pressuring.
- ♫R-E-S-P-E-C-T♫
- Respect everyone’s pronouns & gender identities & sexual orientation.
Let people know that you have LGBTQIA+ books

- At the beginning of the year, I tell students that it’s my job to have books that meet the diverse needs of my student population -- that they should be able to see themselves in the collection.
- This doesn’t mean you have to have a rainbow book display (although you can!)-- but do include LGBTQIA+ books in the displays you create (just as you would include diversity in any book display).
- This year, the NC Battle of the Books list includes 1 LGBTQIA+ title (**Ashes to Asheville**), and the NC Young Adult Book Award nominees includes 2 LGBTQIA+ titles for middle school (**The Other Boy & The Prince and the Dressmaker**) and 1 for high school (**The 57 Bus**).
Middle School Must Haves

- *Ashes to Asheville* by Sarah Dooley
- *Better Nate Than Ever* by Tim Federle (Innocuous if you’re nervous)
- *Darius the Great Is Not Okay* by Adib Khorram (Middle & High)
- *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier
- *Gracefully Grayson* by Ami Polonsky
- *Magnus Chase* books by Rick Riordan (Middle & High)
- *The Misfits* and *Totally Joe* by James Howe
- *The Other Boy* by M. G. Hennessey (About a transgender boy who gets outed)
High School Must Haves (part 1)

- Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Sáenz. Everything else he’s written for YA 😏
- Beautiful Music for Ugly Children by Kirstin Cronn-Mills
- Boy Meets Boy by David Levithan
- Carry On: The Rise and Fall of Simon Snow by Rainbow Rowell
- The House You Pass by the Way by Jacqueline Woodson
- I’ll Give You the Sun by Jandy Nelson
- If I Was Your Girl by Meredith Russo
High School Must Haves (part 2)

- More Happy than Not; History Is All You Left Me; They Both Die at the End by Adam Silvera
- Openly Straight by Bill Konigsberg
- The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky
- Simon vs. the Homo Sapien Agenda and Leah on the Offbeat by Becky Albertalli
- Symptoms of Being Human by Jeff Garvin
- We Are Okay by Nina LaCour
- When the Moon Was Ours and Wild Beauty by Anna-Marie McLemore
Some Important LGBTQ Nonfiction

- *The 57 Bus* by Dashka Slater
- *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin
- *Branded by the Pink Triangle* by Ken Setterington (Middle & High)
- *The Mayor of Castro Street: The Life and Times of Harvey Milk* by Randy Shilts
- *October Mourning: A Song for Matthew Shepard* by Lesléa Newman
- *Pride: Celebrating Diversity & Community* by Robin Stevenson (Middle & High)
- *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* by Audre Lorde
- *Stonewall: Breaking Out in the Fight for Gay Rights* by Ann Bausum (important, but neglects POC leaders)
How To Find Quality Books With LGBTQ Themes

- **Stonewall Book Awards** -- Announced as part of the ALA Youth Media Awards at the midwinter meeting
- **Rainbow Books List** -- Created yearly by the Rainbow Booklist Committee of the Gay, Lesbian, Transgender, and Bisexual Roundtable of the American Library Association
- **Lambda Literary Award** -- has a Children/Young Adult Category
Funding Options

Library Budget

- There are more and more award-winning books with LGBTQ themes and authors and artists to select from.
- LGBTQ themed books are on this year’s Middle School BOB list as well as the NC Young Adult Book Award Lists.

Local PFLAG and PRIDE Organizations!

- In Alamance County they bought $300 worth of books for my library and offered to do so for other school libraries as well!

Grants, fundraisers (book fairs, etc.), everywhere you would usually get $$$.
Acknowledgements

Gratitude to Regina DeMauro, Teen Services Librarian at Tompkins County Public Library in New York for her insights and presentation “LGB and Especially T: Serving Queer Teens” at the American Library Association 2018 Annual Conference for resources and health data.

Thanks to PFLAG Alamance and Alamance Pride for their support of the youth and families in our community!
Resources

Safe Schools NC [Annual LGBTQ+ Conference for Educators and School Communities](#) Saturday November 3, Wendell Middle School


GLSEN: [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)

We Need Diverse Books: [diversebooks.org](http://diversebooks.org)

The Trevor Project: [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

It’s Pronounced Metrosexual: [itspronouncedmetrosexual.com](http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com)
Contact Us

**Beth Bruch**
Media Coordinator
Southern Alamance High School
elizabeth_bruch@abss.k12.nc.us
@SAHSMedia

**Paige Ysteboe**
Media Specialist
Western Middle School
paige_ysteboe@abss.k12.nc.us
@WAMLibrary
• Bruch, Beth. Cat’s Cradle Restroom Signs. 2018.
Works Cited - Images