

# Why Youth Pride?

We have been asked about why we need Youth Pride and why organizations such as Durham CAS, public libraries and schools are presenting Youth Pride and Drag Queen Storytime.

**We are involved because kids and parents who identify as LGBT2SQ+ need to know that organizations in our communities and the people at those organizations support, respect and care about them, and will stand up and advocate for them.**

We get involved so we can work with fellow LGBT2SQ+ advocates and allies to raise awareness and help inform others who are learning about the challenges faced by individuals who identify as LGBT2SQ+.

Advocacy and education should not rest solely on the shoulders of LGBT2SQ+ advocacy organizations. We all need to take some responsibility to ensure that everyone is welcomed, loved, respected and empowered.

Social service providers in particular know that the people they serve are often disproportionately at risk.

Approximately 20% of youth involved with the child welfare sector self-identify as LGBT2SQ+, while approximately 10% of the general population do.

LGBT2SQ+ youth are at a greater risk of:

- depression and anxiety
- substance abuse
- family rejection
- violence and exploitation
- verbal, sexual and physical harassment
- homelessness
- living in poverty
- food insecurity
- suicide (at almost three times the rate of heterosexual youth)

**We need Youth Pride for them.**

*It felt nice to not have to hide who I am. It was lots of fun and I felt like I belonged.*  
-Katie

*Attending Durham Youth Pride was an amazing and empowering experience where I could see other youth and have a good time being myself.*  
- Jacob



*Youth Pride means that my trans son has a voice and belongs to a community who will love support and encourage his journey in the best way possible. He doesn't have to be afraid of who he is becoming or apologize for who he is. This community gives him the courage to just be. Many thanks again for the great work you do!*

*- Christine*

# Why Drag Queen Storytime?

## Literacy

At its core, all story time events encourage the love of reading in children, and instill a passion for learning.



## Fun

Drag Queens embody the very spirit of having fun with and celebrating the best sense of self-expression. Kids love to dress up and they come to the events with no pre-conceived judgments. Judging the people who read the books is a learned behaviour and we need to challenge those biases that lead to more entrenched intolerance.

## Diversity

The books are all age-appropriate stories that celebrate all aspects of diversity: race, age, ability, language, gender identity and sexual orientation.

The stories reflect the world we live in, one where children see other children and adults of all sizes, age, colour and identity, and all types of family composition. The stories encourage children to celebrate our differences, and appreciate the beauty in those differences. (*And realize that sometimes our 'differences' really aren't all that different*).

## Respect

The events and books encourage children and parents to respect everyone regardless of how we look, dress, talk and live our lives.

## Community

The story time events bring together organizations that support families and the people in the communities we serve. These are a fun events that unite people while listening, sharing, laughing and sometimes dancing – all while celebrating a love of books and the diversity of our communities.

