

Why Solidarity Matters?

Pride is a celebration for members of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities to be their full selves. Pride recognizes the struggles for 2SLGBTQ+ human rights and reaffirms the power of social movements. Solidarity is our advocacy for an inclusive society where everyone belongs. Solidarity means putting allyship into action by learning, challenging, and standing with members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Whatever Pride means to you, ETFO affirms that Pride and Solidarity make our union stronger.

- Solidarity requires us to challenge false narratives about 2SLGBTQ+ identities. This harmful rhetoric is dehumanizing and minimizes dignity and the right to safety in public and online spaces.
- Anti-2SLGBTQ+ rhetoric impacts workers. Unions ensure that 2SLGBTQ+ staff are entitled to being safe and protected. All worksites must be free from discrimination or harassment based on protected grounds. [Section 32.0](#) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act includes the requirement for employers to have a policy and program with respect to harassment, and to investigate issues of experienced code-based harassment.
- Unions can develop collective agreement language to ensure gender inclusive provisions for 2SLGBTQ+ workers.
- Unions have a role in removing barriers for 2SLGBTQ+ workers who have intersectional lived experiences based on protected grounds such as race, ethnic origin, disability or creed.
- Anti-2SLGBTQ+ hate has no place in union spaces. The Ontario *Human Rights Code* include protections from discrimination and harassment for gender identity and gender expression.
- ETFO locals support members to work in bias-free and discrimination-free environments. Pride and Solidarity represents our union's continued commitment to advocating for members, students, and communities.

The Social Landscape and 2SLGBTQ+ Hate

Anti-2SLGBTQ+ hate shows up in different ways from educational legislation to misinformation about 2SLGBTQ+ identity. ETFO continues to challenge 2SLGBTQ+ hate and advocate for 2SLGBTQ+ students and members.

- Child protection and “parental rights” have been used to legislate anti-trans policies. In recent years, governments in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick have all introduced legislation requiring parental consent for students under 16 to change their names or pronouns in school.
- Misconceptions about 2SLGBTQ+ people and communities continue to inform public perceptions in Canada. Only 53% of Canadians think that being part of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities is not a choice.ⁱ

- Police-reported hate crimes targeting gender identity or expression increased for a fourth consecutive year and hate crimes targeting sexual orientation declining following three consecutive years of increasesⁱⁱ.
- Socially conservative groups have lobbied governments to remove books from libraries which affirm 2SLGBTQ+ identity. The [Toronto Public Library](#), [Ottawa Public Library](#), and [Innisfil ideaLAB & Library](#) have all created Book Sanctuary Collections and joined the [Book Sanctuary](#) movement. This movement was launched by the Chicago Public Library in 2022 in response to book bans across the United States.

Why Positive Spaces Matter?

All educational stakeholders have a role in creating welcoming educational spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ students. Educators create classrooms which celebrate diversity by curating classroom resources which positively affirm 2SLGBTQ+ identities. Learning environments should model safety and belonging by challenging homophobic and transphobic beliefs and attitudes.

- 2SLGBTQ+ youth experienced identity-based bullying. 77% of sexually and gender diverse youth surveyed in 2019 indicated they had been the target of bullying.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 states that “gender identity and gender expression are dimensions of diversity under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*”.^{iv} Schools must foster learning environments where 2SLGBTQ+ students feel they belong, particularly when these social identities are being targeted.
- Gender-Sexuality Alliances (GSAs), also referred to as Gay-Straight Alliances, are essential for 2SLGBTQ+ students. GSAs allow 2SLGBTQ+ students to connect and socialize within affirming spaces. Every student within a school in Ontario is entitled to creating a GSA according to the *Accepting Schools Act*.
- Show your Pride by flying the rainbow flag, hosting events to raise awareness, and listening to diverse 2SLGBTQ+ student experiences.

ⁱ Government of Canada (2023, March 31) Women and Gender Equality Canada. *Attitudes, Awareness and Behaviours Surrounding 2SLGBTQ+ Communities in Canada*. https://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tps-gc/por-ef/women_gender_equality_Canada/2023/111-22-e/POR111-22-Report.html?nondisclaimer=1

ⁱⁱ Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. (2026, March 30). Police-reported hate crime in Canada, 2024. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/260330/dq260330a-eng.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱ Government of Canada (2026, January 26) Women and Gender Equality Canada. *Facts, stats and impact: 2SLGBTQ+ communities*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/free-to-be-me/federal-action-2slgbtqi-communities/facts-stats.html>

^{iv} Ontario Ministry of Education. (n.d.). Policy/Program memorandum 119: Education in Ontario: Policy and program direction. <https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-119>