

Engaging Parents on LGBTQ Inclusion

Prizmah Conference
March 2019

Intentions

- Respect
- Reasonable Confidentiality
- Move up, Move back
- Speak from Personal Experience
- Assume Good Intentions
- Stay Positive
- Give space for imperfection

Icebreaker:

Name and Pronoun

School and Role

One fear about this you have

What we know about LGBTQ identity development

At what age do people develop understandings of gender categories?

A: 5-6 years old

B. 12-13 years old

C. 12-13 months

D. 6-9 months

Infants develop gender categories by 6-9 months

-If hear a low voice, will preferentially look to a man's face
-Not a mature understanding of what this means, but rather just an early - Recognition of patterns in their environment.

And by age 2, have learned gender stereotypes

At what age young people start to avoid peers who violate gender norms?

A: 4-6 years old

By preschool, 4-6 years old, they will start to avoid peers who violate gender norms

B. 12-13 years old

C. 15-16 years old

D. 8-9 years old

At what age young people start to label themselves “boy” and “girl”

A: 1-2 years of age

Between 2-3 years of age, they will start to label themselves with a Gender identity

B. 2-3 years old

By age 3-4 years of age, they internalize the belief that gender is stable, boy does not grow up to be a girl

C. 3-4 years old

D. 4-5 years old

Between 5-7, have internalized that gender expression does not change someone's gender.

What is the sign that a child may grow up to be trans?

A: Engage in play or hobbies not normative for their “gender”

B. Dress up on “other genders” clothes

C. Gender non-conforming in their mannerisms, walk, play, etc

D. None of the above

None of the above!
Research shows that it is developmentally appropriate for all children to engage in gender creative play, and the vast majority of these children don't grow up to know themselves as trans or non-binary

What does it mean to be a trans youth?

- A child is considered transgender if they express a **consistent**, **persistent** and **insistent** gender identity that does not align with their assigned sex at birth.
 - **Consistent**: The child reliably claims the same gender identity
 - **Persistent**: These expressions of gender identity continue over a considerable time in the child's life (6+ months)
 - **Insistent**: The child expresses their true gender identity resolutely or intensely
- Youth who express these characteristics often grow up to be transgender adults
- But...many transgender adults did not meet these criteria as children

Sexual Orientation Identity Development

Identity Confusion:

First awareness of gay/lesbian/bisexual queer thoughts, feeling and attraction.

Identity Comparison:

Accepts possibility of LGBTQ identity and begins to internalize what that means for their larger life experience. Isolation is very common

Identity Tolerance:

Understand they are not alone and seek out other LGBTQ folks to combat feelings of isolation

Identity Acceptance:

Acceptance self begins and understanding they can lead a happy, healthy life. Tension between personal and society norms.

Identity Pride:

Immerses themselves in LGBTQ identity, could come out of the closet. May prefer community of mostly other LGBTQ folks.

Identity Synthesis:

Sexual orientation becomes integrated into larger identity and one aspect of their whole self.

Best Practices for Engaging Parents

Community Conversations and Education

Consider having a Keshet trainer come in to educate your parent community

Host other speakers or storytellers to speak to your parents



Communication to your Community

Sometimes, it makes sense to send a letter out to your whole community

Other times, it isn't. Always, always, always make your decision in consultation and with permission of the family

Frame these communications from a place of your values

You can use Keshet's Seven Jewish Values as a starting point too!

Seven Jewish Values

GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSIVE JEWISH COMMUNITY

כבוד

Kavod: Respect

Judaism teaches us to treat ourselves and others with respect; even the stranger is to be treated with respect. Kavod is a feeling of regard for the rights, dignity, feelings, wishes, and abilities of others. Teasing and name-calling disrespect and hurt everyone, so learn to respect people's differences.

שלום בית

Shalom Bayit: Peace in the Home

Our community centers, synagogues, youth groups, and camps are often our second homes. Everyone needs to feel comfortable, safe, welcome, and respected at home. Don't ostracize those who seem different. Strive to settle disagreements in peaceful and respectful ways that allow all community members to maintain their dignity.

בצלם אלהים

B'Tzelem Elohim: In God's Image

The Torah tells us that we are all created "b'Tzelem Elohim" (Bereshit 1:26), in the image of God. This is a simple and profound idea that should guide our interactions with all people. If we see each person as created in the image of God, we can see humanity and dignity in all people. True inclusion is built upon this foundation.

כל ישראל ארעם זה בזה

Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Bazeh: Communal Responsibility

The Jewish principle that "All Israel is responsible for one another" (Shavuot 39a) means each of us must take action and inspire others to create a community in which we can all take pride.

שמירת הלשון

Sh'mirat Halashon: Guarding One's Use of Language

The Talmud warns us that we must take care in how we use language. Talking about others behind their backs, even if what we are saying is true, is prohibited. The guidelines for "sh'mirat halashon" remind us that what we say about others affects them in ways we can never predict. Words can hurt or heal depending on how we use them.

ואהבת לרעך כמוך

V'ahavta L'Reiacha Kamocha: "Love your neighbor as yourself"

Commenting on Leviticus 19:18, "Love your neighbor as yourself," Rabbi Hillel once stated that this was the foundational value of the Torah. It begins with loving ourselves. We must love and accept our whole selves, and in doing so create the capacity for extending that love and acceptance to others.

אל תפרוש מן הציבור

Al Tifrosh Min Hatsibur: Solidarity

"Don't separate yourself from the community" (Pirke Avot 2:5). When you feel different from others in your community, don't isolate yourself. Find allies and supporters who you can talk to. If you know someone who is feeling isolated, reach out; be an ally and a friend.

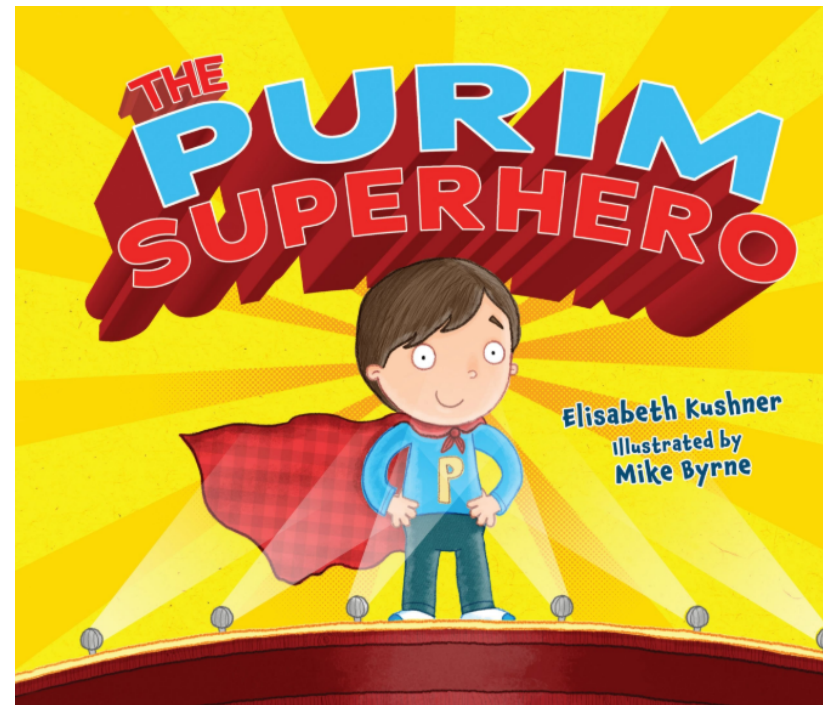
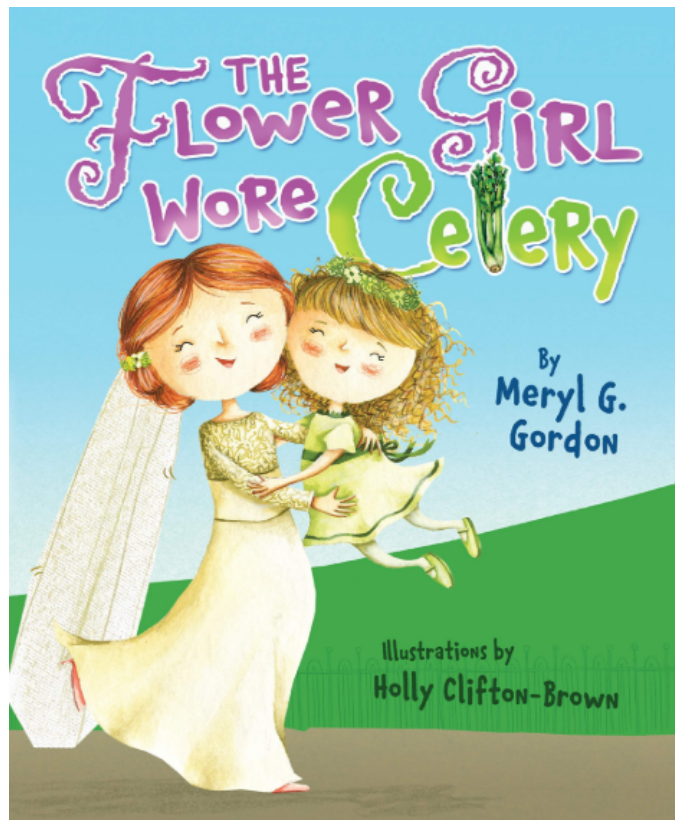


Keshet is a national organization that works for full LGBTQ equality and inclusion in Jewish life.

Keshet
קשת

Provide resources for continued education

The Flower Girl Wore Celery and The Purim Superhero are just two!



Navigating Common Fears

Examples from the Field

Next Steps

Join a Keshet Leadership Project

Bay Area-April 29th

Massachusetts-May 13th

Be on the lookout for other opportunities

Institutional Self Assessment

Keshet's LGBTQ and Ally Teen Shabbatonim

**Continue to provide educational opportunities
for parents, faculty, staff, and students!**



Further Resources

KESHET קשת
Working for the full equality and inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Jews in Jewish life
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