

Using Our Educational Guides

Since 2010 the It Gets Better Project has partnered on numerous films, television specials, online series, books, and more in an effort to inspire, empower, and connect LGBTQ+ youth around the globe. Our board, staff, and volunteers share this scholar's sentiment: "We celebrate storytelling, and especially personal storytelling, for its authenticity, its passion, and its capacity to inspire not just empathy but action."

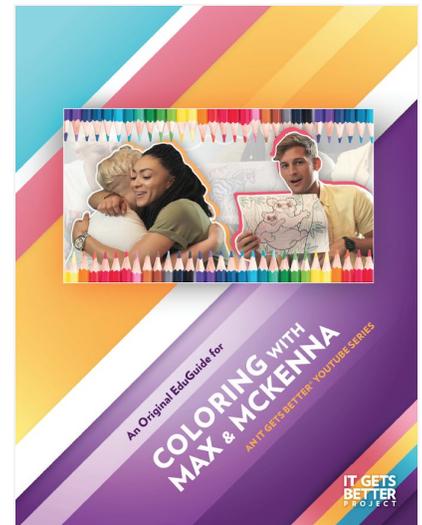
Our guides help build that "capacity to inspire." Each was drafted with a diverse community in mind, and they contain engaging discussion questions and activities that can enrich any participant's viewing experience. The guides also include links to behind-the-scenes videos and other digital content for further research and discussion.

What's more, our guides aren't just for the classroom; they're meant for any space where learning occurs, and where empathy and inclusivity are encouraged. The following are tips for how you can use them in a variety of settings, from a variety of perspectives.

TEACHERS. Introducing new content into your curricula can be a challenge, especially when it comes to time and support from administrators and parents. If time is your issue, consider introducing just a single lesson plan or activity from our guides. You may also consider asking your students to watch some of our online content at home or on their own so your classroom time can be dedicated to activities and discussions.

If getting support from administrators or parents is an issue, invite them to visit www.itgetsbetter.org to learn about the importance of LGBTQ+ storytelling. You can also invite them to a special screening of what it is you'd like to share. Lastly, some of our guides include sample curricular outcomes for language arts, media literacy, LGBTQ+ history, and more.

Note: *Most of our guides were created with middle school and high school students in mind, but they can be adapted for elementary or college students when/if it's appropriate to do so.*



PARENTS. Family acceptance is vital for LGBTQ+ young people. It promotes their well-being and protects them against risk.² It's easy: just find ways to understand and accept your child. You can learn a great deal from other LGBTQ+ adults that have gone through similar experiences. Our website is a perfect place to find their stories.

You can also consider organizing a Family Night for you and your children. Watch some of our content together, and follow the discussion guides' questions and activities. Make time for quality conversation, as well as snacks and games. This kind of family gathering can help your other children understand their LGBTQ+ sibling better, too.

¹ Polletta, F. (2006). *It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics*. Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press.

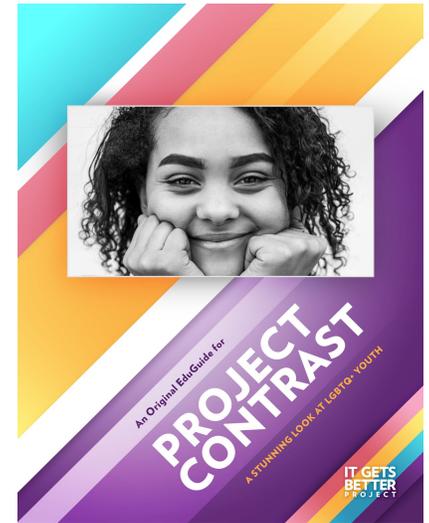
² Ryan, C. (2009). *Supportive families, healthy children: Helping families with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender children*. San Francisco, CA: Family Acceptance Project, Marian Wright Edelman Institute, San Francisco State University.

COUNSELORS. More and more LGBTQ+ people are coming out during their youth, and it's important that you be adequately prepared to serve them. It's also important that you be prepared to help non-LGBTQ+ students empathize with, accept, and include their LGBTQ+ peers. Counselors: prevention is key, but in some circumstances, you may be tasked with conflict resolution if bullying or any other form of harassment occurs.

We hope our content and guides can be helpful in these efforts. They can be used in one-on-one, small group, and classroom settings. Not only can positive storytelling empower LGBTQ+ youth, but it can also instill empathy and understanding in those who are not.

CLUB ADVISORS and **COACHES.** Clubs and sports teams can be great sources of support for LGBTQ+ young people. They offer opportunities to explore interests and talents, cultivate new skills, and develop friendships. This is especially true if clubs and sports teams are inclusive groups, where all members are accepted for who they are.

As a coach or a faculty advisor to a club (or a Sunday school teacher), make sure you allow your group's members to talk about the importance of acceptance. Our guides facilitate these kinds of conversations, as well as supplement them with diverse stories about love and inclusivity. You may even consider hosting a group screening. These kinds of activities will help boost the morale of your LGBTQ+ members. When done often enough, they can help establish greater camaraderie within the group as a whole, as well.



WORKPLACE LEADERS. Many companies are coming to realize that having a diverse workforce is good business. But having employees from different backgrounds and supporting them well are two different things. As a leader in your company, especially if you lead an Employee Resource Group or ERG, it's up to you to find ways to show your LGBTQ+ employees that they and their families matter. Hosting a company screening of some of our content, followed by Q&A, could be a great start.

You can also help position your company to engage more with your local community. Organizing a school visit, or hosting an event inviting an LGBTQ+-friendly club or sports team to your offices, can be a positive way to give back. Our content and guides are great for those kinds of activities.

COMMUNITY LEADERS. The groups mentioned so far are simply microcosms of our greater communities, whether they be school or church communities, neighborhoods, or even towns and cities. These types of communities will thrive when they're inclusive of LGBTQ+ people and families, too.

Whether you're the leader of your PTA, on the City Council, or just a passionate community member, propose the idea of hosting a LGBTQ+ movie night at a local park, or starting a LGBTQ+-friendly book club at your city library, where stories can be shared and discussed openly. Little efforts like this can go a long way.

Have ideas? Interested in screening our content or using one of our guides?
Please email our staff at education@itgetsbetter.org for more information.