



An Original EduGuide for

MOONLIGHT

THE 2017
ACADEMY AWARD®-WINNER
FOR BEST PICTURE

**IT GETS
BETTER
PROJECT**

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www.itgetsbetter.org/Moonlight



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EXPLORING THE FILM:

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Moonlight: The Film

All young people deserve the love and support required to feel safe and supported as they learn and develop—making sense of who they are and the world around them.

Unfortunately too many young people find themselves engaged in the tough task of coming of age without the support of caring and concerned adults. Barry Jenkins' groundbreaking film *Moonlight*, based on Tarell Alvin McCraney's play "In *Moonlight*, Black Boys Look Blue," presents rich opportunities to talk about and foster safer and braver classrooms, particularly for Black LGBTQ students. *Moonlight* presents a thoughtful and sensitive exploration of identity development that transcends traditional, heteronormative "boy-meets-girl" storylines, by exploring the process youth, particularly lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex and asexual youth experience when coming of age while also surviving poverty, homophobia, and broken adults (those struggling with addiction, mental health challenges and expected "social norms").

Much of what we bear witness to of *Moonlight*'s protagonist in the first two stages of his life, from the child called Little to his adolescent evolution as Chiron, happens in spaces between home and school. For educators and youth advocates, this invites opportunities to pose critical questions, and point to resources and recommendations that can support youth in schools and communities whose experience align with Chiron's. These questions are grounded in an intersectional understanding of issues, like sexual orientation or gender identity, that further complicate and compound the already daunting barriers that racism and poverty create for many Black LGBTQ students.

Reconciling difference is at the heart of *Moonlight* and at the end of the film Little has a shoulder to lean on, someone to help him make sense of the world. As educators and advocates for youth our hope is that every child receives such an ending—and that this support and love enables endless possibilities, not limited to feels free. This is the primary reason this work has been so important to the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans—an initiative established by President Barack Obama to ensure a federal office exists to be both unapologetic and intentional in closing opportunity and achievement gaps for all students—but especially those most often neglected and ignored.

To contribute to efforts of caring and concerned adults seeking to be more helpful in supporting the cognitive, social and emotional needs of African American and other LGBTQIA+ students we hosted the first of its kind White House Summit on African American LGBTQ youth. This three day summit, hosted in June 2016, provided a platform from which LGBTQ youth of color were celebrated and centered in identifying recommendations for educators, families and other adults to ensure that LGBTQ youth of color thrive—in school and in life. The recommendations made by youth leaders participating in the summit and lessons learned since the initial convening help to inform the recommendations included in this toolkit. We hope you find it useful as you engage in this critical work.

In this EduGuide, we offer snapshots from the film that connect to overarching efforts to understand and support students like Chiron. With collective contributions from a broad and diverse group of educators moved by the film, we hope to offer resources that enable us to see *Moonlight* as a spectacular cinematic wonder, as well as a call to action. We wish to imagine a world where the responses to Chiron's challenges are met with awareness of the systemic and institutional barriers that affect him; competency about these experiences by teachers, staff, and school leaders; capacity to meet these challenges; and the heart and courage to fight for safer and braver classrooms for all kids.

With hope and optimism,

Tim'm T. West

Senior Managing Director
LGBTQ+ Community Initiative
Teach for America

David Johns

Former Executive Director
White House Initiative on Education
Excellence for African Americans
Executive Director
National Black Justice Coalition

Justin Tindall

**Director, Education and Global
Programming**
It Gets Better Project

Moonlight: The EduGuide



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIEND, COURTESY OF A24

Through *Moonlight*, Director Barry Jenkins brings us the story of Chiron, a young black man growing up in Miami who faces challenges, including both physical and emotional abuse, as he comes to terms with his identity as a queer man. The film is based on Tarell Alvin McCraney's unpublished semi-autobiographical play, "In Moonlight, Black Boys Look Blue."

In 2017, *Moonlight* became the first movie with an all-black cast and the first LGBTQ-centered film to win Best Picture at the Academy Award. The film's editor, Joi McMillan, became the first black woman to be nominated, alongside her co-editor, Nat Sanders, for an editing Oscar, and actor Mahershala Ali became the first Muslim to win an acting Oscar for his outstanding performance.

Moonlight serves as an important examination of the intersectionality of maleness, blackness, and sexuality throughout Chiron's life. To deeply understand the film, we recommend the following actions:

01 Watch the film in its entirety. The 1 hour 50 minute version of the film is available on Amazon, iTunes, and Netflix, as well as on most other major streaming services. To first watch the trailer for the film, go to itgetsbetter.org/Moonlight. **NOTE: Moonlight is rated R for some sexuality, drug use, brief violence, and language throughout.**

02 Watch [Moonlight's Tarell Alvin McCraney: 'I'm still that vulnerable boy'](#) -BBC Newsnight" (6 minutes, 32 seconds) on youtube.com to see the playwright discuss his personal life and the story behind *Moonlight*.

03 Supplement the film with additional videos that highlight the experiences of queer black folks and other people of color such as those listed in the 'Additional Resources' section of this guide. You can also screen the stories included in 'Lesson 3: Pride and Race' of *Finding Pride*, another original EduGuide from the It Gets Better Project available at itgetsbetter.org/FindingPride.

Moonlight: The EduGuide

(Continued)

The guide you're reading now is an adaptation of the *Moonlight Educator Toolkit (It Takes a Village)* written by Tim'm West, available for free at <http://bit.ly/MoonlightforEducators>.

That toolkit was written with educators and their professional development in mind. It is divided into ten themes divided across three sections:

- 01. BEFORE MOONLIGHT**, tools and resources for consideration before watching the film
- 02. WATCHING MOONLIGHT**, tools and resources for consideration that pivot around moments in the film
- 03. AFTER MOONLIGHT**, tools and resources for advancing safer and braver classrooms and schools for students like the film's protagonist, Chiron.

This format is excellent for groups that have the time and option to watch *Moonlight* in its entirety.

In comparison, this EduGuide was written by education staff at the It Gets Better Project with young people in mind, particularly those who identify as LGBTQ+. It also explores many of the same 10 themes as the Educator Toolkit, but instead of being divided into before, during, and after sections, the themes are explored within one of the three stages of Chiron's life presented in the film:



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIND, COURTESY OF A24

ACT I:

Little

(35 MINUTES, 55 SECONDS
-0:00 TO 35:55)

Chiron as a child



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIND, COURTESY OF A24

ACT II:

Chiron

(32 MINUTES, 10 SECONDS
-35:55 TO 1:06:05)

Chiron as a teenager



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIND, COURTESY OF A24

ACT III:

Black

(40 MINUTES, 20 SECONDS
-1:06:05 TO 1:46:25)

Chiron as a young adult

This format is particularly helpful for GSA groups and for classroom settings where time is limited; instead of watching the entire film in one go, these groups can consider screening just one or two acts at a time. Each act stands on its own, and offers scenes that are compelling, informative, and engaging. Breaking the film up in this way can provide you with ample opportunity to work through the items offered in this guide and to supplement your group's screening of the film with other activities like in-depth conversations, a Q&A session, or a panel. Feel free to choose the format that works best for you.

Moonlight: The EduGuide ***(Continued)***

Below are a few ideas on integrating some or all of this guide:

Engaging and Telling Our Stories:

The writers, directors, and cast of *Moonlight* bring the story of Chiron's experience to life through the power of film. We encourage you to follow their lead, and explore the stories and experiences of people like Chiron in your own community, where and when their stories are available and appropriate to witness.

Flexible Timing:

You can select one or two parts of this guide to focus on, or work through the entire guide. There are opportunities to engage with this film in as little as 45 minutes (for example, watch the interview with Tarell Alvin McCraney and a single act from the film) or develop a longer-term discussion group. The decision is yours.

Flexible Settings:

This guide should be useful in any setting in which young people are learning and growing, from classrooms to clubs to parent groups and more.

Both LGBTQ+ Community Members & Allies Encouraged:

Outside of Juan, Teresa, and later, Kevin, Chiron has few allies in his community. We hope this guide invites discussion from members and allies alike from your own community to encourage dialogue and belonging.

We also encourage you to review www.itgetsbetter.org/glossary before screening the film. This webpage can help prepare you for conversations and discussions that may come up while screening the film.

General Discussion Prompts

The following questions can be used after watching the film, key scenes, or other materials or in conjunction with the activities included in the guide. These questions will work for silent written reflection, in turn-and-talks, or in small or whole group conversations.

01 What is something you learned from watching *Moonlight*? What feelings and emotions did the film bring up for you?

02 If you could talk to a character from the film, who would it be and why? If you could ask that person one question, what would you ask?

03 Did you connect to any of the experiences in the film? How so?

04 Have you ever experienced some of the challenges (either external or internal) that Chiron faces in the film?

05 Were you surprised by anything in the film? Why or why not?

06 If you could share one message with the filmmakers, what would you say?

07 How would you be an ally to a classmate who's having similar experiences to Chiron?

08 What is the significance of actual moonlight in the film? How is it important to Chiron finding his identity?

09 Where did you see aspects of Chiron's identity intersect and how are those intersections important to the experiences he has throughout his life?

10 What do you think happens next to Chiron? Explain your reasoning.

Act I: *Little*

35 minutes, 55 seconds
0:00–35:55



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIEND, COURTESY OF A24

SUMMARY

In Liberty City, Miami, Cuban drug dealer Juan finds Chiron, a withdrawn child who goes by the nickname "Little," hiding from a group of bullies in a crackhouse. Juan lets Chiron spend the night with him and his girlfriend Teresa before returning Chiron to his mother Paula, who subsequently grounds him from watching TV for worrying her. Chiron continues to spend time with Juan, who teaches him how to swim and advises him to make his own path in life.

One night, Juan encounters Paula smoking crack with one of his customers. Juan berates her for her addiction and neglect of her son but she rebukes him for selling crack to her in the first place; all the while they argue over Chiron's upbringing. She implies that she knows why Chiron gets beaten up by his peers, alluding to "the way he walks," before going home and taking out frustrations on Chiron. The next day, Chiron admits to Juan and Teresa that he hates his mother and asks what a "faggot" means. Juan describes it as "a word used to make gay people feel bad." He tells Chiron it is okay to be gay and that he should not allow others to mock him. After asking Juan whether he sold drugs to Paula, Chiron leaves as Juan appears distraught and remorseful for his actions.

Summary taken from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moonlight_\(2016_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moonlight_(2016_film))

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 01** A key element of the film is that Chiron finds family outside of his home in Juan and Theresa. They could be called "chosen family." How do you think about the concept of family? Do you have a "chosen family" in your life?
- 02** During one of the film's most memorable and jarring scenes, Little asks Juan, "what's a faggot?" While Juan's answer has, for good reason, frequently been highlighted for showing compassion and unconditional love, what do we believe enabled Little to feel comfortable enough to ask the question? What kinds of steps can allies take to enable students to feel comfortable enough to ask such questions?
- 03** How can homophobia, sexism, racism, and poverty intersect in the individual lives of LGBTQ youth? How do you see this play out in the film?
- 04** How does Juan define manhood? Chiron? Other characters? What behaviors are expected of men generally in today's world? How are these behaviors articulated to boys as they develop over time? Where do we see this play out in the film?
- 05** How would you define what it means to be a "man"? Where does this definition of manhood and/or masculinity come from? How do you describe or define those who do not fit within your definition?

Act I: *Little*

35 minutes, 55 seconds
0:00–35:55

ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE

Students will identify key moments, people, and places in their lives and choose illustrations and text that relate to those key moments.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

01 Discuss images that people use as symbols for events in their lives. For instance, symbol of birth could be a stork or baby; divorce in family could be a drawing of a broken heart.

02 Display examples of life maps, either one you've created for yourself or for a character from *Moonlight*. You can also use examples available by searching "Life Map" at [Prezi.com](https://prezi.com). As your participants examine these examples, ask them to comment on how the images are used, the amount of additional text that has been added, the way the creators comment on the significance (positive or negative) of the life events on the maps, and so forth.

03 Tell your participants that they'll be making their own graphic life maps. Participants can develop their life maps on paper or on computers. Remind them to put an appropriate picture with each event.

A. If you have several sessions with which to do this project, you can break participants into groups to brainstorm significant life events. These can be events that bring up a range of emotions or experiences that involve important people or places. Challenge groups to come up with at least 30 different life events. Groups can then share these whole class.

B. If you do not have several sessions, allow participants to brainstorm individually.

04 Once participants have had the opportunity to develop their life maps, give each person 3–5 minutes to share their map with the entire group. The group should ask 3–4 questions about the presenter's life map, as well as make connections or offer gratitudes.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS (FOR PARTICIPANTS)

01 How did you decide which life events to include? Were there any that you chose not to include? Why or why not?

02 How do you see intersections of your race, gender, sexuality, etc. play out in your life map? How so?

03 Where do you think your life map will go next? How do these past events influence your future?

04 Who are the important people on your life map? What role do they play in how you see your personal identity?

05 What are the important places on your life map? What role do they play in how you see your personal identity?



Act II: Chiron

32 minutes, 10 seconds
35:55–106:05



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIEND, COURTESY OF A24

SUMMARY

Now a teenager, Chiron juggles avoiding school bully Terrel and spending time with Teresa, who has lived alone since Juan's death. Paula lets her crack addiction and prostitution get the better of her and coerces Chiron into giving her money Teresa loans him. One night, Chiron has a dream in which his friend Kevin has sex with a girl in Teresa's backyard. On another night, Kevin visits Chiron at the beach near his house. While smoking a blunt, the two discuss their ambitions and the nickname Kevin gave Chiron when they were children. They kiss, and Kevin masturbates Chiron.

The next morning, Terrel manipulates Kevin into participating in a hazing ritual. Kevin reluctantly punches Chiron until he is unable to stand before watching as Terrel and his goons beat him up. When a social worker urges him to reveal his attackers' identities, Chiron, not wanting to turn Kevin in, refuses, stating that reporting them will not solve anything. The next day, an enraged Chiron walks into class and smashes a chair over Terrel's head. The police arrive, arrest Chiron for assault, and send him to juvenile hall.

Summary taken from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moonlight_\(2016_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moonlight_(2016_film))

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 01** We often imagine parents in simplistic ways and struggle to make space for parents who do not show up in schools in ways that we typically imagine or expect. For example, we struggle to make space for parents who work two or more jobs, who are unable to visit the school site during traditional school hours, or who, as we see in the film, are parents who struggle with addiction and illness. How can better school community advocates serve families like Chiron's? What does allyship look like in these circumstances?
- 02** Two powerful scenes in *Moonlight* involve violence at school. What role do you think educators should play in preventing and responding to such violence? What are some ways students can play a role in creating school environments that are safe, inclusive, and conducive to learning?
- 03** There are a number of ways that people talk about Chiron's sexuality in veiled terms (e.g. "how he walks," "soft," etc.). What are some of the veiled terms regarding sexuality or gender that you have heard expressed in society? What effect might this kind of veiled language have on LGBTQ+ youth? Explain your reasoning.
- 04** In what ways did the school administrator in *Moonlight* convey untrustworthiness or a lack of safety, despite trying to present an understanding face? What reaction from them would have been more effective?
- 05** How has mental health concerns or bullying been addressed in your experience in schools? What effect does that have on ensuring safety and belonging in your school and in its surrounding community?

Act II: Chiron

32 minutes, 10 seconds
35:55–106:05

ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE

Students will develop an awareness of their emotional state and identify tools for managing stress. NOTE: This exercise, in itself, could be stressful and/or anxiety-inducing for some students. Consider soliciting the support of your on-campus counselor in giving this lesson. At the very least, have a list of support resources on hand for students who may need them.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

01 Introduce your participants to the idea of a Mental Health Tracker, like those available at mentalhealthprintables.com. Make it clear that Mental Health Trackers are private, and the participants do not need to share the specifics of their Mental Health Tracker with anyone else at any point if they don't want to.

02 Ask your participants to fill out their own Mental Health Tracker over a period of two weeks. By tracking thoughts and activities over a period of time, participants can begin to see patterns emerge. For example, a participant could see that lack of sleep often leads to an increase in anxiety. To identify such patterns, participants should track any strong emotions or moods they experience, their sleep and eating patterns, and their exercise schedules. They should also note any behaviors that may impede their health such as drug use, self-harm, etc.

NOTE: Facilitators should inform participants that thoughts of suicide and/or self-harm, drug or alcohol abuse, over- or under-eating, or other extreme behaviors can be serious issues that require attention from a trained mental health professional. If such help is needed, please refer them to itgetsbetter.org/GetHelp or help them identify a crisis service in their local area.

03 Once your participants have completed their Mental Health Trackers, invite them to separate into pairs or small groups to discuss the following prompts:

A. Think about some of the stress and other negative emotions you experienced. How did these situations play out in your mind? How did these situations play out in your body? If you feel comfortable sharing, what were some of the thoughts that went through your mind in these moments?

B. Think of the ways that you were able to deal with stress and other negative emotions, or brainstorm ways you could have dealt with them better when they occurred. What seems to help you cope best during tough times?



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIEND, COURTESY OF A24

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS (FOR THE ENTIRE GROUP)

01 Think about the ways you and your fellow participants experienced and dealt with stress and other negative emotions. In what ways were you similar? In what ways did you differ? Why do you think that is?

02 In stressful situations, we often experience flight, fight, or freeze responses. When did we see that happen for Chiron in the film? When do we see those responses play out in our own personal lives?

03 Did tracking your emotional state over two weeks help you to identify the triggers that might initiate stress responses during your day? How so? How might identifying those triggers help you handle such situations better?

04 Who are the people you can turn to when you are experiencing stress? What are some of the messages you would want to hear from them in those moments?

05 In *Moonlight*, Chiron's experience at school goes beyond everyday stress; he experiences a high-level of acute trauma both inside and outside of the school environment. For students like Chiron who are growing up in poverty or struggling with their personal identity, what types of situations at school might cause such high-levels of acute trauma to occur? How might those causes be mitigated by school administrators, educators, and students?

Act III: *Black*

40 minutes, 20 seconds
106:05–1:45:25



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIEND, COURTESY OF A24

SUMMARY

Now going by the nickname “Black,” an adult Chiron is released from prison and deals drugs in Atlanta. He receives frequent calls from Paula, who asks him to visit her at the drug treatment center where she now lives. One day, he receives a call from Kevin, who invites him to visit him should he decide to come to Miami. The next day, he wakes up and realizes he has had a wet dream. While visiting Paula, he stands up to her, calling her out for her negligence. She proceeds to apologize for not loving him when he needed it most and tells him she loves him even if he doesn’t love her back. Eventually, the two of them reconcile before Paula lets her son go.

Chiron travels to Miami and reunites with Kevin, who now works at a diner. When his attempts to probe Chiron about his life result in silence, Kevin tells him he’s had a child with an ex-girlfriend and, although the relationship ended, he is fulfilled by his role as a father. Chiron reciprocates by talking about his unexpected drug dealing, proceeds to ask Kevin why he called, to which Kevin plays a song on the jukebox that made him think of Chiron. After Kevin serves Chiron dinner, the two of them go to his apartment. Kevin tells Chiron that he is happy despite the fact that his life didn’t turn out as he had hoped, resulting in Chiron breaking down and admitting that he has not been intimate with anybody since their encounter years ago and since his arrest. Kevin comforts him and they embrace. In a flashback, Little stands on a beach in the moonlight.

Summary taken from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moonlight_\(2016_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moonlight_(2016_film))

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 01 Though we don’t see these scenes play out in the film, we know that Chiron’s life after his time in school is spent in a series of spaces in which hypermasculinity is highly valued (e.g. the prison system, drug trade, etc.). What do you think it means to be a “real” man in these spaces? Explain and provide examples for your reasoning.
- 02 Juan, and by the end of the movie, Kevin, are viewed as two of the “good” men in Chiron’s life? In your personal experience, what qualities do the men you respect and admire have? What values and morals do they live by? What kinds of things do they say and do that makes you respect and admire them?
- 03 Being a “real” man and being a “good” man are two identities that are often at odds in our society today. How do you see this play out in the film? How do you see this play out in your own community? How do you think this affects men and boys? How do you think it affects women and girls? How do it affects those who identify as transgender or non-binary?
- 04 The acts of the film are distinguished by the main character’s nicknames at the time: Little, Chiron, and Black. How do these names play into his personality and experience throughout the film? What do you think these nicknames symbolize?
- 05 Why do you think actual moonlight plays such an important role in the film?

Act III: *Black*

40 minutes, 20 seconds
106:05–1:45:25

ACTIVITY

Adapted from the 'Privilege for Sale' activity available at thesafezoneproject.com.

OBJECTIVE

Students will acknowledge and investigate the ways in which privilege plays a role in our lives based on our personal identity. NOTE: The word "privilege" has become really loaded, and a borderline trigger for a lot of people. Be prepared for pushback, and do your best to validate or understand where it is coming from.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- 01** Divide your participants into groups of no more than four participants. Make sure each group is comprised of participants who are able and willing to engage in a collective discussion.
- 02** Explain the directions: "For the purpose of this activity, imagine that you are a completely blank slate – you do not have any privilege based on your personal identity. On the sheet in front of you are a list of privileges – each of which costs \$100. As a group, you'll need to decide which of the privileges from the list you would select based on the money you are provided. You'll have 10-15 minutes to determine which privileges you wish to purchase. If you do not decide within the time limit, you will forfeit the remainder of your money."
- 03** Check-in with each group to see if anyone has any questions about the directions.
- 04** Pass out dollar amounts for the different groups using pieces of scrap paper or Monopoly money. Vary the amounts from \$300–\$1400, but do not tell the groups they are receiving different amounts.
- 05** Give the groups 10–15 minutes to decide which privileges they'd like to purchase using the 'Privileges for Sale' worksheet that follows this lesson. Make sure you encourage them to explain/justify their choices. Give them a warning when they have 3 minutes left.
- 06** Bring the group back together to debrief.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS (FOR THE ENTIRE GROUP)

- 01** How did this activity make you feel?
- 02** How did you go about picking privileges? Was there anything on this list that surprised you?
- 03** Why do you think this activity is called "Privilege for Sale" instead of "Heterosexual Privilege for Sale" or "Cisgender Privilege for Sale?" How does intersectionality play a role in the ways privilege affects our lives? How did you see this come into play in *Moonlight*?
- 04** Why do you think we chose to use money versus tokens or other methods? Why did we give out different sums of money? How did you feel when you found out that the other groups had received a different amount than you?
- 05** This activity focuses on the privileges of heterosexual and cisgendered individuals. What are similar privileges for other majority groups in the United States (e.g. white, upper class, Christian, able-bodied, etc.)? How do you see these privileges play out in *Moonlight*?



Act III: *Black*

40 minutes, 20 seconds
106:05–1:45:25

PRIVILEGES FOR SALE

Adapted from the 'Privilege for Sale' activity available at thesafezoneproject.com.

Please look at the following list of privileges. Each privilege costs \$100 to purchase. As a group, please purchase as many privileges as your money allows.

01. Celebrating your marriage(s) with your family, friends, and coworkers.
02. Paid leave from your job when grieving the death of your partner(s).
03. Inheriting from your partner(s)/lover(s)/companion(s) automatically after their death.
04. Having multiple positive TV role models.
05. Sharing health insurance with your partner(s).
06. Being able to find role models of the same sexual orientation.
07. Being able to see your partner(s) immediately if in an accident or emergency.
08. Being able to be promoted in your job without your sexuality playing a factor.
09. Adopting your children.
10. Filing joint tax returns.
11. Able to obtain child custody.
12. Being able to complete forms and paperwork with the information you feel most accurately communicates who you are.
13. Being able to feel safe in your interactions with police officers.
14. Being able to travel, or show ID in restaurants or bars, without fear you'll be rejected.
15. Kissing/hugging/being affectionate in public without threat or punishment.
16. Being able to discuss and have access to multiple family planning options.
17. Not questioning normalcy both sexually and culturally.
18. Reading books or watching movies about a relationship you wish you could have.
19. Receiving discounted homeowner insurance rates with your recognized partner(s).
20. Raising children without worrying about state intervention.
21. Having others comfort and support you when a relationship ends.
22. Being a foster parent.
23. Using public restrooms without fear of threat or punishment.
24. Being employed as a preschool or elementary school teacher without people assuming you will "corrupt" the children.
25. Dating the person you desired in your teens.
26. Raising children without worrying about people rejecting your children because of your sexuality.
27. Living openly with your partner(s).
28. Receiving validation from your religious community.
29. Being accepted by your neighbors, colleagues, and new friends.
30. Being able to go to a doctor and getting treatment that doesn't conflict with your identity.
31. Being able to access social services without fear of discrimination, or being turned away.
32. Sponsoring your partner(s) for citizenship.
33. Being open and having your partner(s) accepted by your family.

Additional Resources



CREDIT: PHOTO BY DAVID BORNFRIEND, COURTESY OF A24

It has been said many times that people leaving *Moonlight* feel compelled to think differently about their humanity. For example: for educators serving LGBTQ+ youth, *Moonlight* calls on them to think seriously about the ways silence around how LGBTQ+ students are treated in our schools and communities negatively impacts their ability to ensure brave and secure spaces for all.

Beyond this, *Moonlight* also serves as an invitation for adults in general to think differently about their relationships with the youth they serve. It calls on them to admit oversights, challenge how they shame and moralize certain behaviors and identities, and actively create structures to ensure that the Chirons of our communities feel safe, affirmed, and prepared to thrive in the world.

To take this learning beyond the film, we invite you to take a look at the following resources, from online videos discussing the power behind the film to nonprofit organizations that are working to uplift, empower, and connect LGBTQ+ and black youth around the globe.

ONLINE VIDEOS

“[Moonlight wins Best Picture](#)” (8:15) and “[Moonlight wins Best Adapted Screenplay](#)” (2:26) from [Oscars](#) on [www.youtube.com](#)

“[Director Barry Jenkins on Creating Empathy Through His Film ‘Moonlight’](#)” (12:20) from [VICE](#) on [www.youtube.com](#)

“[Watch ‘Moonlight’ Director Barry Jenkins Revisit His Hometown](#)” (2:29) from [Vanity Fair](#) on [www.youtube.com](#)

ARTICLES & REPORTS

[From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Diversity and Social Justice](#) by Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens

[LGBTQ Youth of Color](#). Very comprehensive report on Discipline Disparities, School Push Out, and the School to Prison Pipeline produced by GSA Network.

[First See ‘Moonlight,’ Then Rethink the School to Prison Pipeline](#). Great HuffPost Blog by Jeff Baker, M.Phil.Ed.Counselor and Mental Health Advocate

[American School Counselor Association](#) (.pdf) provides a very affirming statement about supporting LGBTQ students.

[GLSEN’s LGBTQ Students Pushed out of Schools](#). LGBTQ students are disproportionately impacted by zero tolerance policies.

(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE)

Additional Resources

ARTICLES & REPORTS (CONTINUED)

[Shared Differences: The Experiences of LGBT Students of Color in Our Nation's Schools](#) (.pdf) documents the experiences of over 2,000 LGBTQ+ middle and high school students of color who were African American or Black, Latino/a, Asian or Pacific Islander, Native American, and multiracial, using data from the 2007 installment of GLSEN's biennial survey of LGBT students, the National School Climate Survey, along with results from in-depth individual and group interviews.

[Gaze on Mandingo](#) by Tim'm West. In this essay, published in his first book, *Red Dirt Revival: A Poetic Memoir in 6 Breaths*, the author theoretically explores the impact of the culture of black masculinity particularly on black gay men.

[A Necessary Story: How 'Moonlight' Allows Black Manhood To Exist Beyond Toxic Masculinity](#) by Robert Jones, Jr. for *Essence Magazine*

[Bullying and the Crisis of Masculinity](#) by NewsOne Staff

[Masculinity and 'Moonlight': Eight black men dissect Barry Jenkins' momentous film](#) by Amanda Parris for CBC Arts. A dialogue with black male artists, writers and speakers on one of the year's most important cinematic moments.

['Moonlight' is a Stunning Deconstruction of Black Masculinity](#) by Brian Josephs for *SPIN Magazine*

[Under the Cherry Moon: A Meditation On Black Male Intimacy and 'Moonlight'](#) by Tremaine Johnson for *Philadelphia PrintWorks*

ORGANIZATIONS & ONLINE CAMPAIGNS

[LIVE Out Loud Youth Organizations Directory](#). Much of the work that needs to be done will happen beyond the school context. Live OUT Loud provides a directory of several national organizations though you are encouraged to seek LGBTQ youth serving organizations where you are.

[Welcoming Schools](#), a project of the HRC Foundation, is a comprehensive approach to improving school climate in elementary school environments with training, resources, and lessons to help schools in embracing family diversity, creating LGBTQ-inclusive schools, preventing bias-based bullying, creating gender-expansive schools, and supporting transgender and non-binary students.

[Teaching Tolerance](#). Teachers and administrators work hard to make their classrooms welcoming places where each student feels included. But despite these efforts, students who are—or who are perceived to be—lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT) continue to face a harsh reality.

[Trevor Project](#). Research has shown that African American youth are more likely to attempt suicide than other groups. The Trevor Project has collaborated to create a Model School District Policy for Suicide Prevention. This modular, adaptable document will help educators and school administrators implement comprehensive suicide prevention policies in communities nationwide.

[GLSEN Guide for Working with Students of color](#). Want to be an advocate and ally to your LGBT students of color? Start with the resource in the blue Download Resources box to the right: *Considerations When Working with LGBT Students of Color*.

[#ThisIsLuv campaign](#) highlights LGBT love and support in Black communities and families.

The [National Black Justice Coalition](#) is a civil rights organization dedicated to empowering Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

The vision of the [Center For Black Equity](#) (CBE) is to build a global network of LGBT individuals, allies, community-based organizations and prides dedicated to achieving equality and social justice for Black LGBT communities through Health Equity, Economic Equity and Social Equity.

[PFLAG- Black](#). Understanding that many Black parents face challenges at the intersection of racism and homophobia and transphobia, many in Parents and Friends of Lesbians & Gays, have organized around this intersection.

[SWERV Magazine](#) is a national lifestyle periodical, celebrating the culture and community of African American LGBT people throughout the country.

[The Unleashed Voice Magazine](#) (Memphis). It's more than a magazine—it's A Synergized Movement.

[Athlete Ally](#) is a 501c-3 nonprofit organization that provides public awareness campaigns, educational programming and tools and resources to foster inclusive sports communities. We mobilize Ambassadors in collegiate, professional and Olympic sports who work to foster "allyship" in their athletic environments. The programs include Ambassadors from over 80 colleges and over 100 professional athletes.

[YOU Belong](#) is a Sports & Leadership Camp inspires dozens of inner-city LGBT youth.

About the Organization



The **It Gets Better Project** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Los Angeles, California. Its mission is to uplift, empower, and connect LGBTQ+ youth around the globe. With affiliates operating on 4 different continents, the organization boasts a truly global operation. Together, they use the power of story – told through online videos, social media, films (like *Moonlight*), television specials, books, and more – to uplift, empower, and connect LGBTQ+ youth around the globe. So far, over 60,000 It Gets Better videos have been shared.

The It Gets Better Project has also identified over 1,100 organizations in 40+ countries around the world offering support to LGBTQ+ youth. To find a resource near you or anywhere in the world, go to www.itgetsbetter.org/GetHelp.

CONNECT WITH THE ORGANIZATION:

Website: www.itgetsbetter.org

Email: info@itgetsbetter.org

FOLLOW THE ORGANIZATION:

YouTube: www.youtube.com/itgetsbetter

Facebook: www.facebook.com/itgetsbetterproject

Twitter: twitter.com/ItGetsBetter

Tumblr: itgetsbetterproject.tumblr.com

Instagram: www.instagram.com/itgetsbetter

Writer: Sara Taylor

Designer: Jamie Nicholes

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