

## Identifying School Needs:

### Sexual and Gender Diversity content in the school library AUDIT for TEACHERS and SCHOOL STAFF



*Resource developed by Felicity Martin, Same-Sex Attracted Young People's Support Project, Nillumbik & Banyule Region, August 2004.*

Imagine never reading a story or seeing a TV show or movie that reflected it was ok to be yourself.

For many same-sex attracted young people or young people experiencing confusion over their gender identity, searching for and finding a book or seeing a positive representation of who they are on TV or on video may be the first time they realise they are not alone.

By conducting this audit of the books and resources available in your school library, your school will be able to highlight whether it is responsive to the needs of the same sex attracted young people or those exploring their gender identity. This audit is not intended to provide a definitive list of topics or themes but instead aims to provide schools with an easy way to get started.

## Catalogue Search

**Using the in-library catalogue, conduct a “keyword” search for the following words (this is something many same sex attracted young people have already done in their school or community library).**

Search for Key Word	Total number of hits	Book	Videos	Magazines/Journals	Other
<b>Same Sex Attracted or Attraction (SSA)</b>					
<b>Lesbian</b>					
<b>Gay</b>					
<b>Bisexual</b>					
<b>Transgender</b>					
<b>Homosexual</b>					
<b>Queer</b>					

## Book Search

Young People will often turn to stories to find solace in the fact that someone else understands what they are going through as adolescents. Themes such as first crushes, first kisses, being embarrassed about your body or having a bad hair day are familiar to both same sex attracted and straight young people alike.

1. Fiction, particularly youth fiction, that cover the themes of:

Theme	Number of books
Sexuality	
Sexual orientation other than heterosexual	
First same sex relationship	
Questioning sexual identity or orientation	
Being gay	
Being a lesbian	
Gender diversity	
Transgender	
Being bisexual	
Coming out to yourself	
Coming out at school	
Coming out to family	
Same sex attraction (SSA) in any form	
Feeling good about being SSA	
Alternative families (for example: two mums or two dads)	
Lesbian or gay relatives	

2. Reference Books, including autobiographical and biographical stories or anthologies, that cover the themes of:

Theme	Number of books
Sexuality – positive representations of SSA or GLBT identity	
Sexuality – negative representations of SSA or GLBT identity	
Sexual orientation other than heterosexuality	
Gender diversity	
Transgender	
Transexuality	
Coming out	
Same-sex attraction	
Alternative families (for example: two mums or two dads)	
Support services for SSA or gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender young people	
Sexual Health for SSA or GLBT people especially young people	
GLBT people in Art: as artists, painters,	
GLBT people in literature: as writers, poets	
GLBT people in History: as explorers, inventors, scientists	
Lesbian or gay rights in Australia	

**TOP TEN List of Titles in your school library that cover the range of issues listed above:**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Date of publication</b>	<b>Brief description</b>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

## Some ideas for action...

1. Contact Hares & Hyenas, Melbourne's only gay and lesbian bookstore, and ask about youth fiction, coming out books, books for friends and family of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender young people.

Hares & Hyenas  
135 Commercial Road  
South Yarra  
Phone: 9824 0110  
Fax: 9824 2839  
Email: [hares@bigpond.net.au](mailto:hares@bigpond.net.au)  
Website: [www.hares-hyenas.com.au](http://www.hares-hyenas.com.au)

2. Create a "sexuality display" in a prominent area of the library – include the TOP TEN books you identified earlier, youth fiction, anthologies and resource books. You may want to order posters from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society or the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard, the "Over the Rainbow" booklet or fliers from PFLAG to incorporate into the display.
3. Create some useful posters or leaflets for students/teachers, such as "Doing a project on discrimination/families/legal system?" and inform them about library resources that include content about sexual or gender diversity.
4. Put a rainbow sticker on the Library door so young same sex attracted people in your school know that the library has books for them! Rainbow Flag Stickers available for order online from Rainbow Warehouse.

Phone: (03) 5248 3613  
Fax: (03) 5248 3615  
Email: [info@rainbowwarehouse.com.au](mailto:info@rainbowwarehouse.com.au)  
Website: <http://www.rainbowwarehouse.com.au>

## Where else you can get books

Look out for the gay and lesbian section or ask for booklists or info about gay, lesbian, bi and transgender themes.

### **Readings Books & Music**

[www.readings.com.au](http://www.readings.com.au)

Carlton

309 Lygon Street, Carlton, 3053

Tel: (03) 9347 6633

Malvern

185 Glenferrie Road, Malvern, 3144

Tel: (03) 9509 1952

Hawthorn

701 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, 3121

Tel: (03) 9819 1917

Port Melbourne

253 Bay Street, Port Melbourne, 3207

Tel: (03) 9681 9255

Tel: (03) 9824 2299

### **Living Solutions Bookshop**

[www.livingsolutions.com.au](http://www.livingsolutions.com.au)

### **Options – Family Planning Victoria Bookshop**

901 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill, 3128

Tel: (03) 9257 0146

### **Borders Books & Music**

Wantirna South

Knox City Shopping Centre, Burwood Highway, Wantirna South,  
3152

Tel: (03) 9887 2211

Carlton

Lygon Court, 380 Lygon Street, Carlton, 3053

Tel: (03) 9348 0222

Chadstone

Chadstone Shopping Centre, 1341 Dandenong Road,  
Chadstone, 3148

Tel: (03) 9569 1600

South Yarra

The Jam Factory, 500 Chapel Street, South Yarra, 3141