

# WHY YOUTH PRIDE?

*Why do we need Youth Pride, and why are organizations such as Durham CAS presenting Youth Pride and Drag Queen Storytime?*

We are involved because we want to ensure everyone is informed about organizations and individuals in our communities that support, respect and care for children, youth and parents who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. Youth Pride initiatives are proactive and offer publicly visible advocacy for affirming services, policies and systems.

We get involved so we can work with 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, advocates and allies to raise awareness and help inform others who are continuing their learning about the challenges faced by individuals who identify within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Advocacy and education should not rest solely on the shoulders of 2SLGBTQIA+ advocacy organizations. We all need to take some responsibility to ensure that everyone is welcomed, loved, respected and empowered.

Social service providers in particular know that the people they serve are often disproportionately at risk.

Approximately 20% of youth involved with the child welfare system self-identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, while approximately 10% of the general population does.

## **2SLGBTQI+ youth are at a greater risk of:**

- depression and anxiety
- substance abuse
- family rejection
- violence and exploitation
- verbal, sexual and physical harassment
- homelessness
- living in poverty
- food insecurity
- suicide (at almost three times the rate of heterosexual youth)

*Attending Durham Youth Pride was an amazing and empowering experience where I could see other youth and have a good time being myself.*  
- Jacob



*Youth Pride means that my trans son has a voice and belongs to a community who will love support and encourage his journey in the best way possible. He doesn't have to be afraid of who he is becoming or apologize for who he is. This community gives him the courage to just be. Many thanks again for the great work you do!*  
- Christine

*It felt nice to not have to hide who I am. It was lots of fun and I felt like I belonged.*

-Katie

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# WHY DRAG QUEEN STORYTIME?

## LITERACY

At its core, all story time events encourage the love of reading in children, and instill a passion for learning.

## FUN

Drag Queens embody the very spirit of having fun with and celebrating the best sense of self-expression. Kids love to dress up and they come to the events with no preconceived judgments. Judging the people is a learned behaviour and we need to challenge those biases that lead to more entrenched intolerance.

## DIVERSITY

The books are all age-appropriate stories that celebrate all aspects of diversity and inclusion: race, age, ability, language, culture, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. The stories reflect the world we live in, one where children see other children and adults of all sizes, age, colour and identity, and all types of family composition. The stories encourage children to celebrate our differences, and appreciate the beauty in those differences. (And realize that sometimes our 'differences' really aren't all that different).

## RESPECT

The events and books encourage children and parents to respect and appreciate everyone regardless of how we look, dress, talk or live our lives.

## COMMUNITY

The story time events bring together organizations that support families and people in the communities we serve. These are fun events that unite people while listening, sharing, laughing and sometimes dancing – all while celebrating a love of books and the diversity of our communities.



[durhamcas.ca/YouthPrideDurham](http://durhamcas.ca/YouthPrideDurham)

