



International Day
Against **Homophobia**
and **Transphobia**

An initiative from



Taking action for the emergence of a
world inclusive of sexual and gender diversity.

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Fondation Emergence needs your donations

Donations by cheque made payable to:
Fondation Émergence inc.

Online donations can be made on homophobiaday.org



Fondation Émergence is a registered charitable organization
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Homosexuality and trans identity are not diseases
A campaign produced in 2008



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International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia

The annual campaigns to fight homophobia and transphobia culminate on May 17th, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. This date is symbolic; the World Health Organization (WHO) removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses on May 17, 1990.

Holding an annual theme day dedicated to fighting homophobia and transphobia is an idea that originated in Quebec in 2003, at the initiative of Fondation Émergence. With the help of partners, this day also became recognized in Canada, Belgium, France and other countries, finally becoming an international day: homophobiaday.org.

The annual campaigns to fight homophobia and transphobia belong to everyone. Fondation Émergence creates the annual theme, produces promotional material and invites people from all backgrounds to adopt the campaign, organize activities and spread the message.

Participate!

This day belongs to YOU!

The campaign to fight homophobia and transphobia provides a special opportunity to contribute to the development of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in many ways, including:

- hanging posters and distributing brochures;
- using the campaign's promotional material available on the internet or any other relevant material to spark discussion;
- organizing activities, conferences or talks or setting up booths;
- screening films and documentaries that have an LGBT theme;
- speaking out against acts of homophobia and transphobia;
- asking administrative and governmental bodies to adopt resolutions to support the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia;
- encouraging major players in civil society to acknowledge the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia and to participate in the campaign.

Find out more ways you can participate by going to homophobiaday.org and clicking on "Participate"

Resources for immediate assistance



Aide aux Trans du Québec

24/7 helpline and e-mail assistance during daytime hours. Aide aux Trans du Québec's main goals are to assist transgender-identifying people and help them break out of their isolation.

www.atq1980.org



Interligne

24/7 helpline, online chat and e-mail for LGBTQ+ communities, their friends and family, and service providers in the health, education and social service sectors.

www.interligne.co

Tools and resources

All of Fondation Émergence's awareness campaigns since 2001 can be seen at www.homophobiaday.org. It is also possible to order material such as stickers, information guides, informational brochures, etc., at the website free of charge.

Visit the "Resources" section on www.homophobiaday.org to find out about other available resources and tools, suitable for all settings.

**HOMOSEXUALITY
AND TRANS IDENTITY
ARE NOT DISEASES**

An initiative from



homophobiaday.org

In partnership with
Justice
Québec



International Day
Against **Homophobia**
and **Transphobia**

Homosexuality isn't a disease

Love and sexual relations between people of the same sex were long considered a disease by mental health professionals. In 1973, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) declassified homosexuality as a mental disorder in its *Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM). The World Health Organization (WHO) followed suit on May 17, 1990, in its *International Classification of Diseases* (ICD).

Trans identity isn't a disease

The classification of transgender identity has been constantly evolving in recent years. In the *DSM-5*, trans identity has been replaced by "gender dysphoria", which is described as a persistent feeling of discomfort and distress that a person may feel with respect to their gender identity. A diagnosis of gender dysphoria allows a person to receive therapeutic care and to access medical treatments to begin a physical transition. Transgender identity is not a mental health disorder; the psychological distress that can be associated with it is. It's also important to remember that not all trans people experience dysphoria.

What is trans(gender) identity?

Trans(gender) identity refers to the identity of a person who does not identify with the gender assigned to them at birth.



Sexual orientation and gender identity

You don't choose them

Many researchers have sought to find an explanation for homosexuality and transgender identity and many studies have been conducted in search of answers. In spite of the different theories that exist, there is a consensus on a few things: people do not choose their sexual orientation or gender identity, they are not diseases and there are no ways of changing them. Moreover, if such a choice were possible, it is very probable that few people would choose to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), given the many prejudices and the discrimination that these people are subject to.

You discover them

Discovering one's sexual orientation and gender identity is an important process in one's life. Sexual orientation and gender identity do not come to a person like a revelation; rather, a person gradually becomes aware of them. The discovery often occurs at puberty for LGB people and in childhood for transgender people. Without really being able to put words on it, many LGBT people say later in life that they felt different when they were young children.

Homosexuality and transgender identity are not perversions, sexual deviations or unnatural behaviors.

Homophobia and transphobia

Types of discrimination

Like racism, xenophobia or antisemitism, homophobia and transphobia are also types of discrimination. They take the form of negative attitudes and feelings and an aversion towards LGBT people or LGBT identity in general. Homophobia and transphobia are expressed as hatred, disparagement, hostility and rejection towards people considered LGBT and anything related to them. Anyone whose appearance and behavior do not conform to stereotypes of masculinity or femininity could be a target.

Prejudices

Unfortunately, prejudices are hard to get rid of and many remain ingrained in people's mind. Some people still think that homosexuality and transgender identity are mental disorders, and some believe that LGBT people can be cured. However, there is consensus among mental health specialists about the fact that it is impossible to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.



Conversion therapies

As a result of treating homosexuality and trans identity as a disease, "conversion therapies" were established to "cure" people with therapy, drugs, and harsher methods close to torture. These therapies are discredited by all professional mental health organizations and were proven to cause more harm than good. In addition to being unethical, conversion therapies reinforce the stigmatization of LGBT people in society. However, as of 2018, conversion therapies are still legal in most of the world including Quebec.

Blood donation

In Canada, men who had sex with a man, even once, were categorically excluded from giving blood until 2013. This was later changed, decreasing from lifetime exclusion to a five-year moratorium. And in 2016, the criteria changed again: now, men are eligible to give blood if they have not had any sexual relations with another man for at least a year.

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