

Yukon Students Take a Stand Against Transphobia: Calls for Safe Spaces and Factual Information

PCSS GSA

The Porter Creek Gender and Sexuality Alliance on May 3, 2023

PCSS Rainbow Room, Whitehorse, Yukon - The students of the Porter Creek Secondary School's Gender and Sexuality Alliance (PCSS GSA) in Whitehorse, Yukon, are calling for increased support and safety for queer youth in the territory. The call comes in response to news that the public library of Whitehorse platformed the book "Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters" by Abigail Shrier.



"We were disappointed to hear about the platforming of this book, which contributes to a culture of fear and intolerance towards transgender people," said the students of the PCSS Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA). "This can make it difficult for queer youth to feel safe and supported in public spaces."

The students emphasized that safety and security are basic human rights that should be guaranteed for everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. They also noted that queer youth often experience discrimination, harassment, and violence in public spaces due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, which can have a significant impact on their physical and mental health.

"Experiences such as verbal or physical harassment, threats, and assault can lead to feelings of fear, anxiety, and isolation, and can have long-term effects on queer youth's well-being and their ability to participate fully in society," said the students.

The students emphasized that everyone has the right to access public spaces without fear of harm or discrimination, including schools, public transportation, parks, community centers, and libraries. They also noted that when queer youth are denied the right to feel safe in public spaces, they are effectively being excluded from participating fully in society, which is a violation of their human rights.

Since 2019, the PCSS GSA students have been advocating for safer and more inclusive schools in Yukon. They opened the PCSS Rainbow Room, a safe space for students, and successfully petitioned the Yukon Government to ban conversion therapy in the territory. The students worked with Lane Tredger, the Yukon's first non-binary member of the Legislative Assembly, to champion the passage of Bill No. 304. This critical legislation mandates that all schools in the Yukon have safe spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students through student-led activities and organizations. They are committed to advocating for policies that prioritize the safety and well-being of all students, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

PCSS GSA students are taking action on Thursday by visiting the Whitehorse Public Library. They will be submitting review forms for Abigail Shrier's "Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters" book, which they believe promotes discrimination and transphobia. They believe the book also invalidates the transgender experience, misrepresents medical science, endangers transgender youth, and hinders understanding and acceptance in the community. The students are committed to creating safe and inclusive spaces for all and encourage others to join them in promoting factual and respectful literature.

The students of the PCSS GSA are calling on the Yukon Government to work with community partners to ensure 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth and their families are adequately supported, ensure all public spaces are safe for 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth and their families, and ensure that books in public libraries are factual and do not lead to the harm of 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth.

“Using trans kids for political gain is unfair exploitation,” said the students. “Many kids don’t even have a supportive home to return to after a day at school, so we need to ensure that everyone is doing their part to support and protect queer youth in the territory.”

Students of the PCSS GSA

-30-

Contact:

Porter Creek Secondary School Gender and Sexuality Alliance Website:
<https://gsapcss.weebly.com/>

Educational Material:

The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity:
Resources for Transgender, Intersex & Two Spirit People
<https://ccgsd-ccdgs.org/resources-for-transgender-intersex-two-spirit-people/>

Rainbow Health Ontario:
Families in TRANSition: A Resource Guide for Parents of Trans Youth
<https://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/resource-library/families-in-transition-a-resource-guide-for-parents-of-trans-youth/>