



FACILITATION GUIDE

★ RAINBOW KIDS ★

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INTRODUCTION 01

Welcome to Rainbow Kids

Why Rainbow Kids?

Kids develop concepts about gender, families, and love before the age of five. It is important that adults have the information they need to support young children in feeling safe and confident in their bodies, families, classrooms and world.

Many parents, caregivers and educators do not realize the importance of gender-aware and inclusive environments that welcome children's evolving sense of self during the early years, when they are forming foundational concepts about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression (SOGIE).

Traditionally fixed notions of gender and sexual orientation are harmful to all children and have profoundly negative impacts on children who currently or will eventually identify as LGBTQ. For parents of children who may not conform to traditionally accepted gender roles and identities, the need for early information and resources is especially great.

What is Rainbow Kids?

Rainbow Kids is an initiative developed by Community Equity Collaborative (CEC) to **increase awareness and knowledge about topics related to SOGIE in early childhood** among parents, caregivers and educators and to **provide practical and age-appropriate resources, strategies and tools** to engage and support young children as they explore who they are and who is in their world.

In support of these goals, Rainbow Kids offers a webinar, an online resources library and awareness-building materials.

Welcome to Rainbow Kids

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What is the difference between Rainbow Kids and Rainbow Kids en Español?

Rainbow Kids en Español is more than just a Spanish translation of Rainbow Kids. CEC assembled a team of bilingual and bicultural educators and trainers, whose expertise spans mental health, coaching early educators, and public school LGBTQ+ programs. This team collaborated with us to adapt the original webinar content, ensuring cultural relevance for a diverse Latinx community.

They also led the translation work, incorporating inclusive language, pronouns, and their expertise with LGBTQ+ youth. CEC's online library does include Rainbow Kids en Español content and resources.

What is this facilitation guide?

This Facilitation Guide provides an overview of Rainbow Kids resources, offering tips and instructions to support educators, parents, caregivers, and other community members in creating more inclusive and welcoming spaces for all children.

The goals of this guide are to enable Rainbow Kids facilitators to:

- Understand the importance of SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression) issues for adults in the lives of young children
- Become familiar with Rainbow Kids content and resources
- Strengthen facilitation knowledge and skills
- Prepare for conducting successful webinars
- Plan effectively with a checklist and timeline
- Access reference materials and support resources

How is the facilitation guide different from the discussion guide?

We have created a separate Discussion Guide specifically to support and equip college and adult education instructors who are incorporating Rainbow Kids

Welcome to Rainbow Kids

01

content into formal education settings, such as Child Development college courses that include units on inclusive classrooms, gender, diverse families, and related topics. While both guides provide valuable resources, each is tailored for different contexts. The Facilitation Guide is designed to optimize the use of Rainbow Kids resources in broader community settings, whereas the Discussion Guide is focused on formal educational environments. Users are welcome to draw from either guide as needed.

Facilitation Guide Overview

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Tackling SOGIE topics with a child, colleague, parent or really anyone can feel unfamiliar, complex, or even scary. As with many aspects of the education and caregiving of young children, there are no simple nor one-size-fit-all answers for navigating these issues. However, what initially may feel overwhelming can become manageable with the appropriate support and resources. This is true for your audience as well as you as a facilitator.

As a Rainbow Kids facilitator, you will be instrumental in enabling others to feel more comfortable addressing these topics and build warm, inclusive and welcoming spaces for young children. This orientation process will enable you to strengthen your own knowledge and skills and deliver Rainbow Kids content effectively.

Recommended Skills and Experience

Member of the LGBTQ+ community

We highly recommend that Rainbow Kids be delivered by two facilitators and that at least one of those facilitators identify as LGBTQ. Representation matters and few can speak to the lived impact or experience better than those who identify as LGBTQ. While not the same, someone who has spent considerable time engaging with the LGBTQ community and actively working as an advocate for the queer community can work in some

Facilitation Guide Overview

01

situations. Experience leading, teaching or working in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging topics is also very helpful (especially since intersectionality is addressed in Rainbow Kids). Put simply, you need to be familiar and comfortable with these concepts.

Training, presentation or facilitation experience

Experience in training, coaching, presenting, or facilitating content for adults (parents, community members, or educators) is essential. While a Rainbow Kids facilitator doesn't need to be a full-time professional trainer or adult educator, they must be well-versed in training and facilitation fundamentals. This guide provides facilitators with content information and overviews on effective training techniques. If you lack prior experience in training or instructing adults, we recommend seeking professional development opportunities to build skills in training, parent education, and public speaking. Wherever you are in this process, here are a few additional resources.

- [Want a more just world? Be an unlikely ally by Dwinita Mosby Tyler](#)
- [How to train employees to have difficult conversations by Tamekia MizLadi Smith](#)

Mindsets for equity education training

As you begin, consider these tips from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for advancing equity in the classroom or community:

- Reflect on your beliefs, attitudes, and practices.
- Set goals based on your reflections.
- Identify steps to achieve your goals, find resources, and take action.
- Assess your progress and plan ahead.
- Personalize this process of reflection, goal-setting, action, and assessment to meet your personal and professional needs as you engage with Rainbow Kids.

Facilitation Guide Overview

01

Remember, there are LGBTQ+ allies around us. Navigating these topics can be challenging, bringing a range of emotions from joy and relief to confusion and fear. Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) offer these tips for newcomers:

- You are not alone.
- Your reaction is valid.
- You are on a journey.
- You are important.

Identify allies, resources, and support systems around you. Even for those experienced in this work, there is always room to grow. These tips may help you or those joining Rainbow Kids.

Rainbow Kids is a starting point, not a destination. Just as we pair years of formal instruction with play and lived experiences in child development, this content invites participants into a lifelong journey of learning (or unlearning) and celebrating the beauty, resilience, strength, and joy of the LGBTQ community.



BACKGROUND

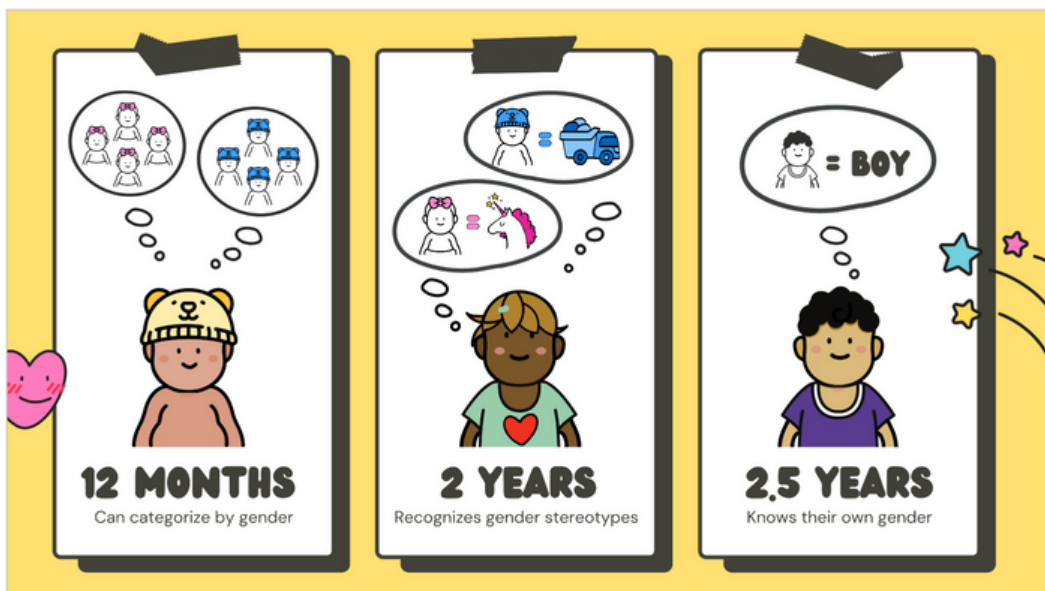
02

The Need

Understanding gender identity and expression is critical for parents, caregivers and educators of young children.

- By one year, children are able to categorize people by gender.
- Between 18 and 24 months, most children use in their speech culturally defined gender labels.
- By two years, children understand basic gender stereotypes.
- By three or four years, most children have a stable sense of their gender identity.

An expansive understanding of gender and sexuality are important for all parents of young children. Parents' messages about gender can have a critical impact on their children's health and social-emotional wellbeing, especially when they do not respect and affirm a child's gender identity. Even for children who identify along traditionally binary gender roles, gender aware and inclusive environments open the doors to effective learning and feelings of safety and acceptance. They celebrate and normalize human diversity (including gender diversity), challenge the limitations of gender stereotypes, and empower children to claim ownership over their own bodies and choices.

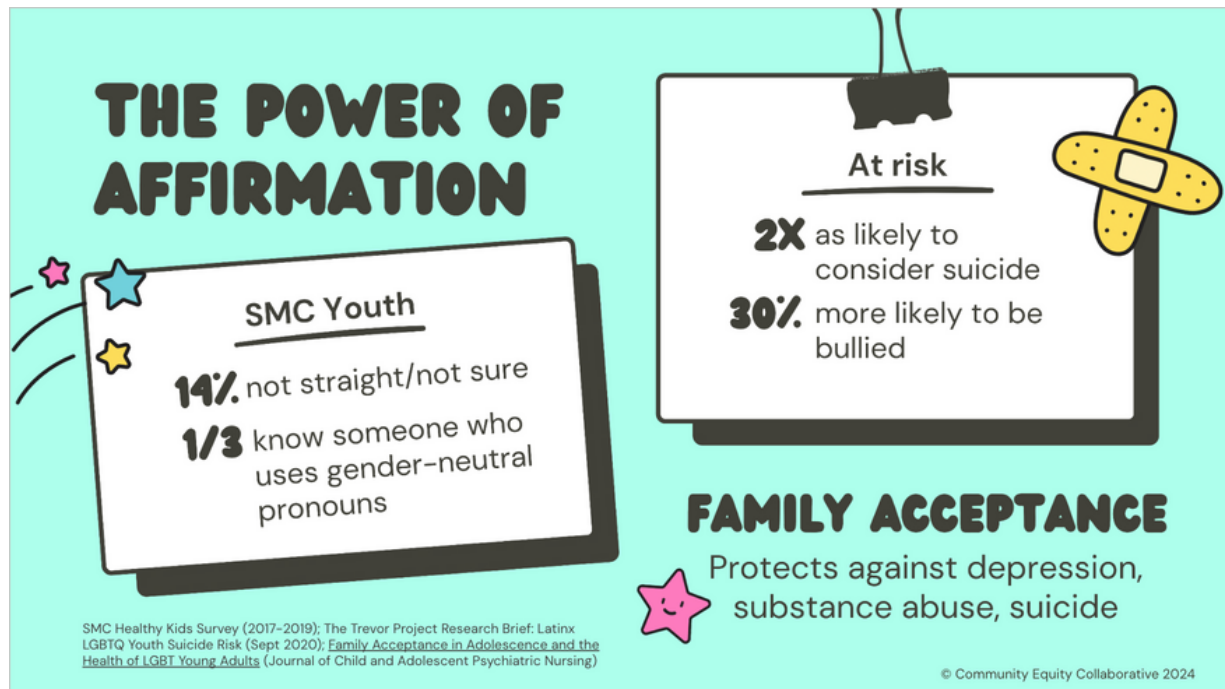


The Need

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Issues of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression are increasingly relevant for parents and children to understand. As an example, a 2018 Pew Research Poll found that more than a third of 13- to 21-year olds know someone who uses gender-neutral pronouns. In the most recent California Healthy Kids Survey (2017-2019) of 19,451 middle- and high-school students in San Mateo County in California:

- 14% identify as not straight or are not sure yet whether they are straight, including:
 - 7% who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual (compared to 5% in 2013).
 - 5% who are not sure yet whether they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or straight.
 - 2% who identify as something other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or straight.
- 1% are transgender and 2% are not sure yet if they are transgender.



Youth who identify LGBTQ disproportionately experience mental health challenges and engage in unhealthy behaviors. According to the Healthy Kids Survey referenced above, LGBTQ youth in San Mateo County are:

The Need

02

- About 30 percentage points more likely than non-LGBT youth to experience **harassment and bullying** at school.
- 30-to-40 percentage points more likely to exhibit **chronic sadness**.
- 2-to-3 times more likely to smoke cigarettes, binge drink, and to have been drunk or high at school.
- Up to twice as likely to have **considered suicide** (26% of straight/hetero students vs. 44% of LGB and 49% of trans students).

But these outcomes are not inevitable. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children can be emotionally healthy and happy regardless of sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression. For example, studies show that transgender children whose gender identity is supported by their parents experience levels of anxiety and depression that are the same as their non-transgender peers.

“When teens have problems, it usually isn't because of their orientation or gender identity. It's usually because of a lack of support from the people they love or because they have been ridiculed, rejected, or harassed.”

— University of Michigan Health System

In fact, teens who believe their parents strongly support their gender identity and expression are **93% less likely to attempt suicide** than teens who do not believe they have strong parental support. Family support is not only a predictor of self-esteem and good health, it protects against depression, substance abuse, and suicidal ideation and behaviors.

By educating themselves on issues of SOGIE, parents, educators and caregivers of young children can increase the likelihood that their children will have positive outcomes.

The Opportunity

02

While organizations, such as PFLAG, GLSEN and Gender Spectrum offer families critical and accessible resources, services and support related to SOGIE topics, **very few focus on the early childhood years nor offer training and resources for parents and caregivers of young children.**

Further, not only are the preschool years a critical time for brain development in terms of gender identity and expression, they are often unique in terms of the strength of the parent-educator relationship. Many parents of young children are new to their role and lean on their child's teacher(s) for support in successfully managing this intense period in their child's life. **Early childhood educators serve as trusted knowledge bridges to caregivers and parents.**

Thus, the early years are a prime opportunity to engage with parents on issues of SOGIE and early childhood educators are an equally important audience for Rainbow Kids

Rainbow Kids Origins

02

To bridge the resource gap and increase awareness about SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression) issues in early childhood, Community Equity Collaborative (CEC), a Bay Area nonprofit focused on advancing equity in education, developed the Rainbow Kids initiative in fall 2021. CEC enlisted Azisa Todd, Lead Trainer and Events Coordinator at the San Mateo County Pride Center, and Nathanael Flynn, an early childhood educator and co-author of "Supporting Gender Diversity in Early Childhood Classrooms," as content advisors and virtual training facilitators.

In April 2022, Rainbow Kids launched its first webinar and supporting resources, which included:

- A virtual training on SOGIE in early childhood, providing age-appropriate information, strategies, and tools.
- Awareness-building materials highlighting the importance of SOGIE training for adults in young children's lives.

Rainbow Kids Origins

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- Resource materials with concise, age-appropriate information and guidance on SOGIE topics.
- A library of online resources for additional learning and practice.

Encouraged by positive feedback and strong interest from school and district staff, city and county officials, ECE organizations, and parents, Rainbow Kids offered more webinars in 2023 and created additional resources.

In 2023, CEC collaborated with bilingual and bicultural consultants Jennifer Ventura, Tania Cisneros, and Israel Cruz, who have experience supporting diverse families and expertise in mental health, early childhood, and LGBTQ+ youth programs. They ensured the initiative's inclusivity and cultural relevance for the Latinx community and supported the delivery and facilitation of Rainbow Kids en Español webinars in spring 2024.

Since its launch, Rainbow Kids has reached hundreds of educators, parents, caregivers, and community members through its events and media campaigns. Post-training evaluations show participants have a deeper understanding of LGBTQ+ issues in early childhood, found the trainings relevant and engaging, and would recommend them to others. Nearly 400 individuals, including several from across the globe, have attended CEC's online webinars. Additionally, Rainbow Kids opened the R9HSA Family Engagement and Cultural Effectiveness conference in Hawaii, attracting over 500 early educators.

FACILITATION GUIDE RESOURCES

03

The Rainbow Kids Facilitation Guide offers various resources designed to build a comprehensive understanding and provide practical tools. Think of these resources as individual pieces of a puzzle that fit together to create a complete picture. The webinar is the central piece, with its slides and script forming the backbone of the learning experience. This overview details each Rainbow Kids resource, provides examples, and explains how to use them. Links to download each resource are included throughout this Facilitator's Guide.

Presentation Slides

03

The Rainbow Kids slides complement the script by highlighting key messages, providing structure, and illustrating important details. The graphics also set the tone by emphasizing not only the focus on early childhood but also a posture of affirmation and celebration.



What do we want participants to take away from the presentation?

The primary goal is to understand and think about the daily messages children receive about gender, love and family. The slides provide, for example, useful imagery that highlights examples of how we intentionally and unintentionally genderize everyday objects and language and limit the concepts of what a family looks like while the script supports a safe space to talk about what we hear and what we can unlearn.

Presentation Slides

03



We understand that this might be the first time participants may be learning about many of these concepts. Maybe they are even coming in with questions or hesitation. Our hope is that we provide a safe space to meet folks where they are and give them basic concepts, language and tools so that they are more comfortable starting and having conversations with children about these topics. While the slides are designed to be simple and to the point, each slide was created with specific intent to support key messages and concepts as they present images reflecting both inclusive and not-so-inclusive worlds.

What are the primary topics covered?

At the beginning of the presentation, the facilitators provide an overview of the agenda.

- First, we provide a brief **introduction** about what to expect during the webinar.
- Second, we offer an overview of **identities**, focusing on gender and love, and how we can create age appropriate ways to support having conversations about them.

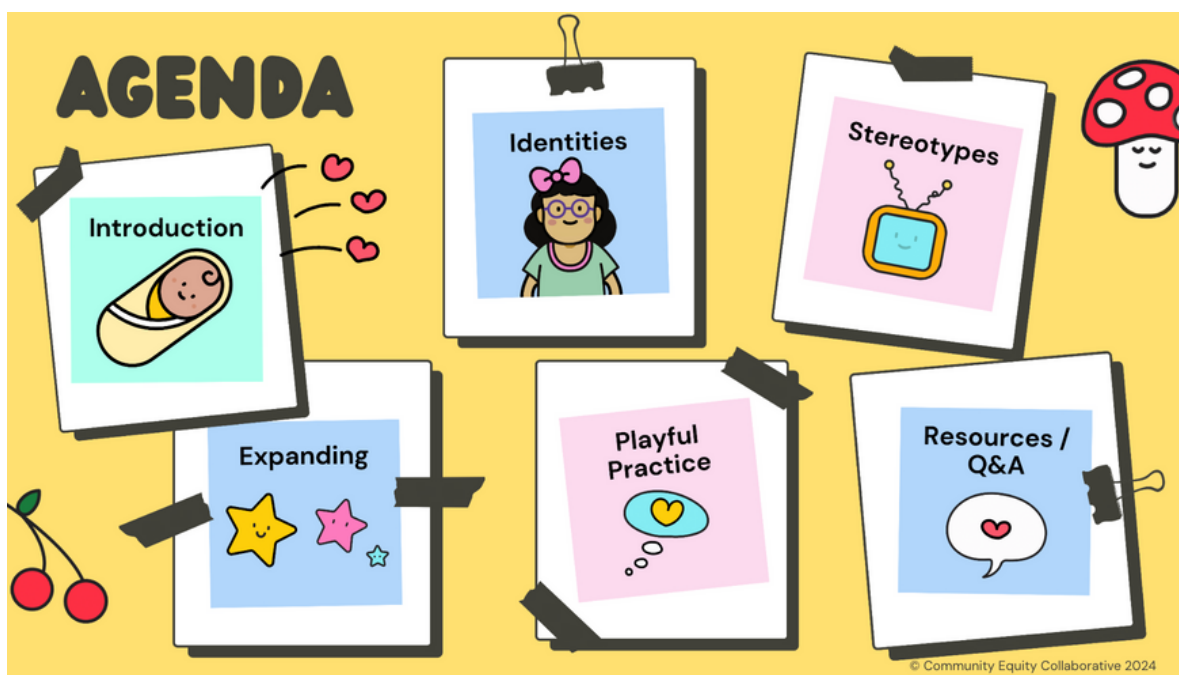
Presentation Slides

03

- Third, we talk about the **messages** and **biases** children receive from the world around them.
- Fourth, we transition our focus to **what we can do** with this information to create a more expansive and inclusive environment.
- Fifth, we **practice together** using pronouns and telling stories that welcome a diversity of genders and roles into our children's lives.

Finally, we wrap up with slides that point to **resources** followed by about 30 minutes of **Q&A**.

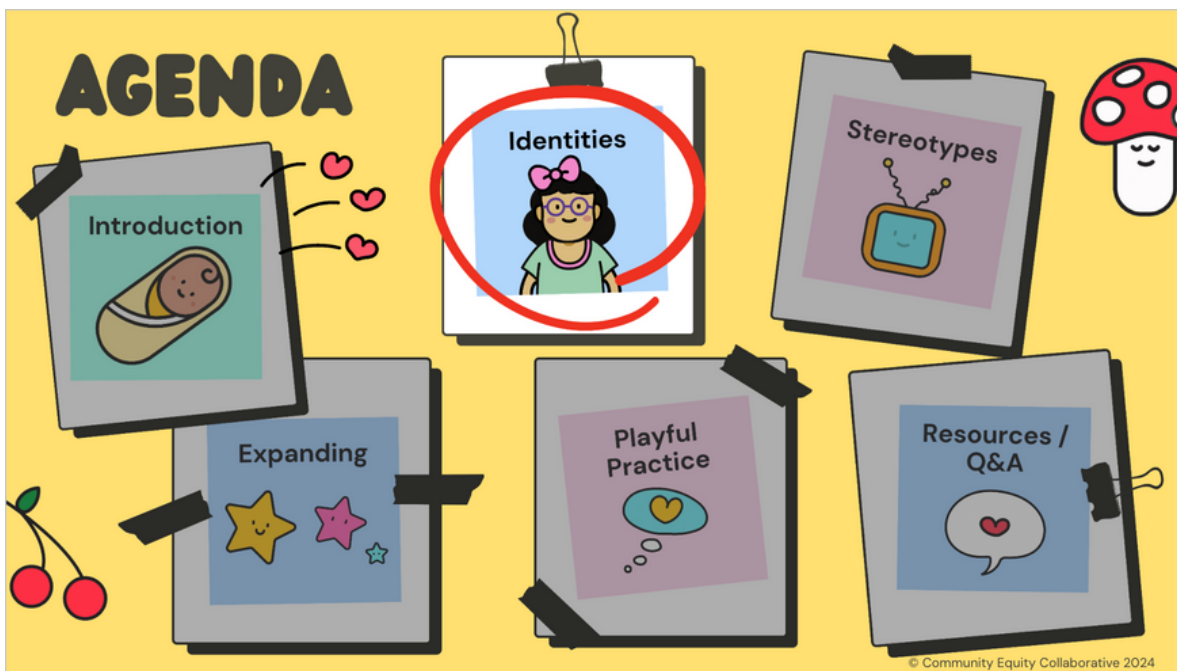
The agenda slide below gives you a picture of these presentation topics as well as an example of the design and graphics used throughout the webinar.



Throughout the presentation, we revisit the agenda slide every time we move to the next section as a way of sign-posting what we have covered and what's next (see next page).

Presentation Slides

03



Is the webinar interactive?

The webinar provides opportunities for the attendees to participate via the chat and Q&A functions as well as through polls, scenarios and practice activities. These moments reinforce concepts and invite personalized engagement. As you move through the content, the slides provide visual markers to facilitate these moments.

PRACTICING PRONOUNS

Teacher Aiko uses they/them/their pronouns. _____
subject
 have been a preschool teacher for 18 years. One of
 Aiko's favorite memories is when _____
subject
 celebrated _____ birthday with the children by
possessive adj.
 having a wiggle-worm dance party (_____ were
subject
 teaching the children about the science of dirt). Aiko
 keeps a photo of the party in _____ kitchen.
possessive adj.

SCENARIO 1: PLAYING "FAMILY"

How children explore
 through play what it means
 to be a "family" and how
 adults can respond.

Presentation Slides

03

The slides and script are designed such that the first 60 minutes are a blend of presented content with facilitated practice or simple scenarios. The last 30 minutes are reserved for questions. We highly recommend saving questions until the end, even though that means there's a lot of content to absorb in the first hour. We offer a stretch break about two-thirds of the way through, in addition to the interactive elements (e.g., polls, scenarios and practice activities).

Can you altar the slides?

No. The link for the Rainbow Kids Presentation Slides will prompt you to make a copy of the slides in your Google Drive, which is how you will access the slides. This also allows you to have your own copy, however the slides are inserted as images and cannot be edited.

Click [here](#) for tips on converting or presenting files in other applications, such as PowerPoint or Google. Please note that the file CAN be presented without any modification or conversion. Click [here](#) for tips and instructions.

Can you share the slides after the presentation?

Slides are available for download on our website though we recommend the one-pagers or video shorts as resources for sharing, such as with follow-up to webinar or training events.

Click [here](#) to access the full slide deck (English).

Click [here](#) to access the full slide deck (Spanish).

Presentation Script

03

Rainbow Kids packs a lot of content into a relatively short presentation. There are a lot of concepts, terms and practices that are new for many. This is why we created a presentation map with a script using language that takes new or challenging ideas and conveys them in easy-to-understand messages. The Rainbow Kids materials (including the script) incorporate the best practices of experts who bring a wealth of knowledge as well as the lived experience of being LGBTQ+ early educators. At the end of the day, the presentation map and script equip you to successfully deliver these materials.



Presentation Map Excerpt (sample)

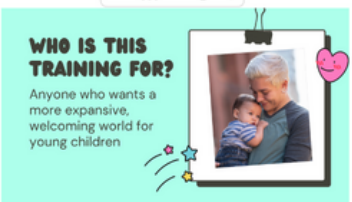
Below is an example of the presentation map with script for one of the slides. Here are a few features to note:

- The far right column identifies the speaker/facilitator plus the amount of time allotted for this slide.
- The bold text (example: I understand why this training is relevant to all families of young children) tells you the main objective or message of this slide. The bullets underneath are the scripted points for you to present.
- Integrated into the script are prompts for various tasks (e.g., for launching polls) throughout the presentation with precise guidance on when to actually perform them.
- The far right column shows you the slide itself and in a few cases highlights an extra activity (e.g. launching a poll) and highlights the goal of this activity.

(See image on next page)

Presentation Script

03

FACILITATOR 2 1 min (minus poll)	I understand why this training is relevant to all families of young children • We created this training thinking about all families because all of us are navigating gender and love and relationships - our own and other people's. • All of us are in a world where LGBTQ+ people exist and deserve to be treated well. • This is a 101 training, and focused on why and how to start having conversations with young children about diversity as it pertains to gender, love, and families. • And we want to specifically welcome participants who are or have LGBTQ+ family members, if that's you or if that's someone you love.	
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Do I have to memorize the script?

No. You do not have to memorize the script. In fact, even our most experienced facilitators have the script on hand regardless of how many times they have delivered the presentation. That said, we highly recommend that you read through the script more than once before presenting. Don't just read it silently in your head! Read it out loud. Get comfortable with the language and flow of the presentation.

In the "Facilitation Concepts & Guidance" section, we provide additional information on delivering this content as a webinar versus in person. Rainbow Kids was originally designed and optimized for virtual settings (e.g., webinar). This allows you to have the script right in front of you while you engage your virtual audience. However, if you are presenting in person - you will need to invest more time rehearsing the material.

Can I add my own thoughts?

Sorta. There is a section during the introduction where you will share a little bit about yourself. And, we have even highlighted some sections in the

Presentation Script

03

script where you are invited to share an example or connect the content to your own experience. But, there is a risk that if you add too many of your own examples or ideas, you will not have enough time to get through the slides in 60 minutes. Your best bet is to stick with the script and only add to it where prompted.

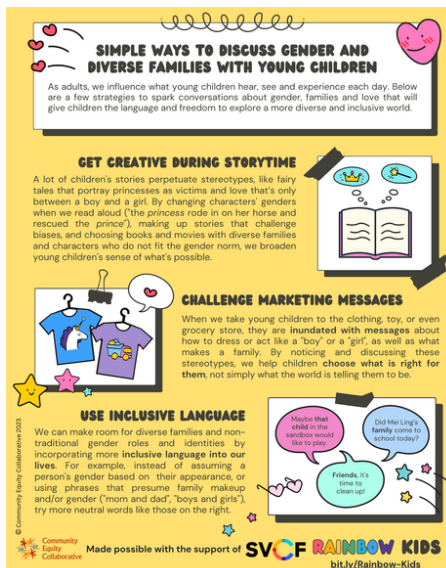
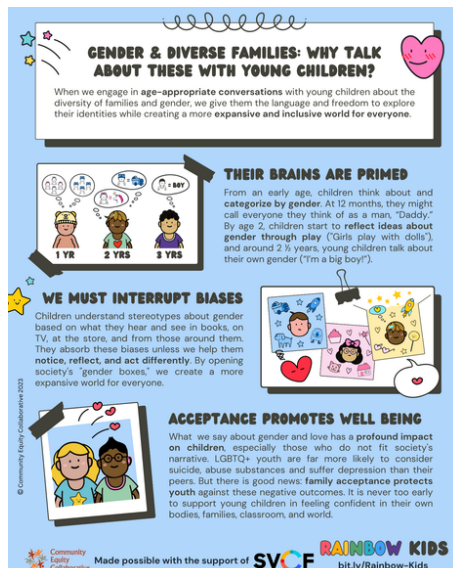
Click [here](#) to access the entire presentation script (English).

Click [here](#) to access the entire presentation script (Spanish)

Rainbow Kids Online Library

03

The Rainbow Kids resources include an online library with options for continued practice and learning, LGBTQ+ inclusive book lists, crisis hotlines, local and national resources and links referenced during the webinar as well as one-page info sheets. These one pagers summarize and reinforce many of the core concepts from the webinar, such as the basics of gender love and family or why it is important to discuss these topics with young children. Here are a couple examples:



Rainbow Kids Online Library

03

Click [here](#) to access the Rainbow Kids resources page where you can find the info sheets, links and other online resources.

Click [here](#) to access Rainbow Kids en Español library with resources in Spanish plus links to Latinx community partners and information.

Video Shorts

CEC created a series of video shorts that add yet another layer of information and insight as you bring these resources to your community. For example, we get a lot of questions about how faith and culture relate to these SOGIE topics. The video shorts are a vehicle for sharing the voices of LGBTQ+ parents, faith leaders, educators and more!

What topics are covered in the videos?

- Faith & Culture
- Family & Friends
- Intersectionality

How long are the videos?

- The videos range in length but average 5 minutes.

Rainbow Kids Online Library

03

When am I supposed to use the videos?

- You can use the videos during the webinar. For example, if you want to save the Faith and Culture video as your 'go to' response if you get a question about religion - you can do that! If you want to integrate one of the videos into the presentation, you can also make that choice.
- You can also share links to the videos after the webinar, as part of the resources you share with participants.

Can the videos replace the webinar?

- No, the videos are meant to supplement, not replace, the webinar.

Do I have to use all of the videos?

- Whether you use any of the videos is up to you. This is one of the few optional items on the list of Rainbow Kids components.
- If you decide to incorporate the videos into your webinar, consider the timing! Although the videos are short, you will not have time to show all of them.

Click [here](#) to access the video shorts library.

Outreach Kit

3

The Rainbow Kids Outreach Kit offers graphics and social media content to help raise awareness as well as content (such as suggested text for newsletters) and imagery for advertising your webinar, parent education or training event.

Outreach Kit

03

Examples of suggested text

Free Webinar about Gender, Love & Family

Kids develop concepts of gender, families, and love before the age of five; it's important that adults have the information they need to support young children in feeling safe and confident in their bodies, families, classrooms and world. They might wonder:

What everyday influences shape my child's sense of what it means to be a "boy" or a "girl"?

How do I support a child's exploration through play of concepts like family and gender?

What strategies can I use to encourage children to feel safe and confident in their bodies?

This free webinar (in English) is returning for parents, caregivers, and anyone who wants a more expansive, welcoming world for young children. Using scenario practice and interactive games, this webinar will demonstrate how to support folks all across the rainbow.

Examples of social media materials



Have you ever shopped for a dollhouse family? Usually, it includes 1 mom, 1 dad, 1 boy and 1 girl, all of the same ethnicity. But that's not reality! Join us on 2/15, 4/19, 6/21 or 9/7 for a webinar about creating a more expansive, welcoming world.

<https://bit.ly/Rainbow-Kids>.

[add social media handles above plus those below (on Twitter, you will have to reply to your tweet to meet the character limit)]

FB: @HapeToysUSA, @HABAusa, @tenderleaftoys

Instagram: @hapetoys_usa, @habausa,

@tenderleaftoys Twitter: @Hapetoys,

@HABA_USA, @tenderleaftoys

Outreach Kit

03



Kids develop the concept of gender before age 5; it's important that adults have the info to support young children in feeling safe and confident in their bodies. Join us on 2/15, 4/19, 6/21, or 9/7 for a webinar about creating a more welcoming world.

<https://bit.ly/Rainbow-Kids>.

[add social media handles above (on Twitter, you will have to reply to your tweet to meet the character limit)]

Email Communications

03

Before the webinar

The Rainbow Kids Outreach Kit offers graphics and social media content to help raise awareness as well as content (such as suggested text for newsletters) and imagery for advertising your webinar, parent education or training event.

After the webinar

We highly recommend sending a follow-up email. Take advantage of this communication to thank participants for attending, ask for feedback and share resources.

FACILITATION CONCEPTS AND GUIDELINES

04

Tips for Facilitators

This guide is not a replacement for professional development on the skills and practices of training, coaching, etc., but here we offer a few reminders about facilitating effective learning events (virtual and in person) for adults.

What do effective facilitators do?

Put simply, an effective facilitator creates a safe space where participants can move individuals (and sometimes groups) forward in their understanding of key concepts. Useful facilitation skills to do this include:



Tips for Facilitators

04

Content and Delivery

Effective presenting has two main components:

Content (What You Say):

- Focus on clear, concise, and impactful messaging.
- Utilize the provided slides and script to stay on track.
- Your job: Deliver the crafted messages confidently.

Delivery (How You Say It):

- Non-verbal communication is key.
- Eye contact, vocal tone, body posture, gestures, and facial expressions enhance your message.
- Practice these skills in both virtual and in-person settings.

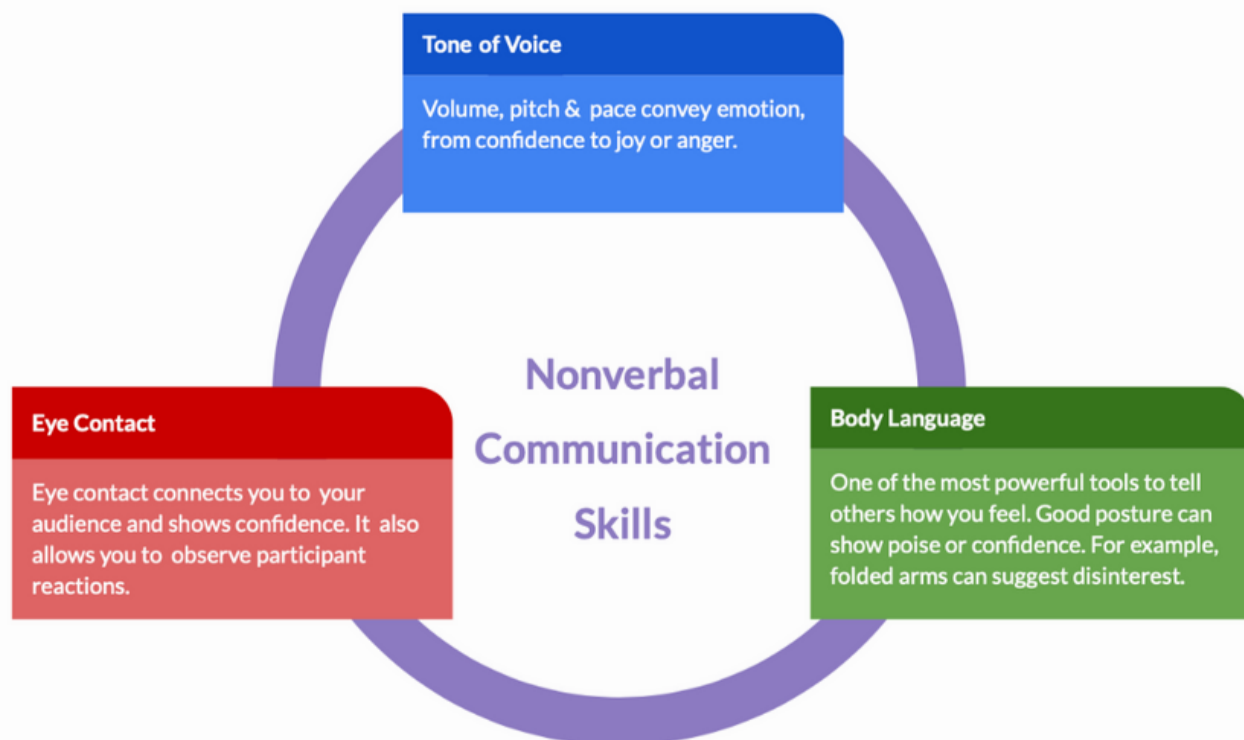
Key Points to Remember

- Visual cues might not always reflect true feelings (e.g., folded arms don't always mean disinterest).
- Understanding common communication principles and norms helps in better facilitation.
- Non-verbal skills bring your content to life and engage your audience.
- Use this guide to focus on delivering your content with confidence, using both verbal and non-verbal techniques to ensure your message is well-received.

(See next page.)

Tips for Facilitators

04



So how do you enhance your public speaking and facilitation skills?

Practice Makes Perfect

- Master the Content: Knowing your script well helps you connect with your audience.
- Practice Techniques: Rehearse with a friend or in front of a mirror for feedback.
- Eye Contact: Are you looking at the audience more than your notes?
- Comfort: Are you confident enough with the text to avoid frequent "umms"?
- Clarity: Are you enunciating clearly, with appropriate inflections?

Final Preparation

- Reflect on these tips and incorporate them into your practice.

Tips for Facilitators

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- Take a deep breath and remind yourself that your message matters.
- Trust that with practice, you will be ready to deliver a successful presentation.

For more tips on public speaking, check out this [resource page](#) from MIT.

Virtual vs. In-Person

04

When deciding whether to host your event virtually or in person, consider two key factors: your audience and yourself.

Know Your Audience

- **Familiarity and Comfort:** Are participants familiar and comfortable with you and each other? Is there general support for the LGBTQ+ community? Some participants may prefer the anonymity of a webinar for unfamiliar topics.
- **Group Agreements:** Establish tone and participation principles at the start of all Rainbow Kids sessions, whether virtual or in person. This helps create a safe and supportive environment.
- **Question Handling:** In a comfortable group, you might still ask participants to submit questions on cards or in advance to maintain control and create a safe space.

Know Yourself

- **Facilitator Experience:** Ideally, have at least one co-facilitator from the LGBTQ+ community for their lived experience. If not, ensure at least one facilitator has a deep understanding of LGBTQ+ issues.
- **Handling Questions:** Decide if you're more comfortable handling challenging questions in person or online. Zoom webinars offer participant management tools that might be useful.
- **Preparation and Comfort:** Consider whether you prefer reading from a

Virtual vs. In-Person

04

script in a virtual setting or managing fewer engagement mechanisms in person.

Additional Considerations

- **Organizational Practice:** Does your organization usually meet in person or virtually?
- **Access:** Which format increases participant access (e.g., travel for in-person vs. internet for virtual)?
- **AV Equipment:** Do you have the necessary equipment for an in-person event?
- **Q&A Management:** How can you facilitate Q&A while preserving safety and anonymity?
- **Resource Sharing:** Do you prefer sharing resources electronically or in print?
- **Community Norms:** How does the community you serve typically access information or training?

Generally, Rainbow Kids sessions are task-based with the objective of sharing information and tools to inspire inclusive communities. Consider whether your gathering is relationship-based or task-based and the cultural norms of the community you aim to serve when deciding between virtual and in-person delivery.

Q&A Management

04

Here are tips for preparing for and managing the Question and Answer time.

- **Ask for questions in advance during the registration process.**
 - Early submissions allow you to prep answers, gauge areas of greatest interest and also provide responses to individuals who are nervous about submitting questions during the session - whether in person or virtual.

Q&A Management

04

- **Review the FAQ Guide!**
 - We have already compiled answers to some of the most common questions.
- **Submit questions early.**
 - Recommend that webinar participants use the Q&A feature on Zoom OR submit questions on index cards if you are hosting an in person event.
- **Listen (or read!) carefully to ensure you fully understand.**
 - If you only read part of a question or stop someone who is speaking, you might be focusing more on your answer than the participant's inquiry.
 - If you are worried about participants who take a long time to ask a question (this happens!), we refer to our earlier recommendation about soliciting questions in advance or via the Q&A function.
- **Decide if you (or a webinar host) will answer the question.**
 - There could be many reasons why you don't answer every question. Maybe you don't have enough time or feel like the question is beyond the scope of the material. Maybe the question is insulting or disparaging in some way.
 - Acknowledge as many questions as you can and rely on the hosts (you recall we recommend having 1-2 hosts who help behind the scenes) who can often assist in answering questions, sharing links, etc..
 - Allow hosts to handle participants who might be creating an unsafe environment for others. Hosts can use the chat feature to engage with individuals privately. Some suggested responses include:
 - "Thank you for your question. To keep the conversation constructive and in line with our webinar guidelines, could you rephrase it as a new question?"
 - Remember that even private/DM conversations via the chat feature can be screenshotted - never say anything publicly or privately that you would not want shared widely.
- **Use one of the videos from our library.**
 - Our video library tackles topics ranging from faith and culture to family that can be very helpful in addressing tough questions, such as those related to religion.
- **Repeat/rephrase questions.**

Q&A Management

04

- If you're reading a question from an index card or the Q&A section on Zoom, repeat the question. It can be confusing if the facilitator simply reads the question to themselves and then starts talking.
- Restating or rephrasing the question also buys you time to formulate an answer in your head. This practice of rephrasing can also be useful if the question employs acronyms or terms that you think might not be familiar to everyone, in which case you can try using more common words or phrases.
- **Don't be afraid to admit when you don't know the answer.**
 - We want to affirm in every aspect of this training that this is an inclusive space and we are all lifelong learners.
 - Some suggested replies for when you don't have the answer include, "I don't know, but I will find out" and "we will include the answer in the materials we send following this event."
 - Don't guess. Good intention does not make a good substitute for the correct answer. After the webinar or training, take the time to do the research or connect with an expert. We have created learning communities precisely for this purpose, so that you can connect with others to share best practices, exchange tips for handling tough questions and get answers from our or other experts.
- **Avoid generalizations.**
 - If you get questions that invite you to make broad generalizations about an entire group, avoid broad statements rooted in stereotypes about religions, cultures, political parties, etc. and of course genders and sexual orientations.
 - Instead, look for onramps and opportunities for building connections or finding shared experiences/interests, etc. We want to reinforce inclusive practices that affirm others, wherever they are in their journey.

Frequently Asked Questions

04

Here are some of the most frequently asked questions and some suggested responses.

How do educators engage parents (of young children) who appear resistant and/or do not respect a child's gender identity?

- Check in with the child first, and ask if they want to talk to their parents about how they feel, if at all. Second, listen. Talk to the parent and ask them about what their concerns are. Be curious. There's a reason they're worried, so talk to them about it. Explain how having expansive ideas of gender is beneficial for children, and remind them that their child's happiness is the most important at the end of the day.

How should I respond to people who cite religion or culture as the reason they oppose a more expansive mindset on gender, love and family?

- Think about other people who share their religion, and how they might talk about issues like gender expression and identity. Are there adults with a similar identity to the child who has talked about how their identity intersects with their religion? If there are, talk to them and learn about their story.

Does a gender-expansive mindset mean that we cannot celebrate feminine girls and masculine boys?

- No! A gender-expansive mindset means that we celebrate all kinds of people, whether they are feminine girls or feminine boys, masculine boys or masculine girls, or anything in between!

How do I infuse a more inclusive mindset into activities and curriculums, from storytime to art activities?

- Tangible visibility matters! Rather than princess dresses, work clothes, boots, etc., provide scarves, hats, and other more open-ended materials. You can read stories about gender-expansive individuals, non-heteronormative families, and other books that highlight and uplift LGBTQ+ individuals. See the Rainbow Kid's Resources page for more resources on inclusive storytime!
- Work to build listening strategies in your children, encourage curiosity, and welcome children's ideas. Allow children to talk, draw, and play about who they are and who they might want to be.

Frequently Asked Questions

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- Create a space where there is a moment for conversations. We need to both listen, and give children the vocabulary and resources to understand these topics and concepts.

How do I respond to people who do not respect my child's gender or orientation?

- It is okay to set boundaries and tell someone, "I understand that you do not accept my child's gender/orientation, but I am not okay with you hurting them," or, "I'm okay if we all go do X activity, so long as you don't insult or hurt my child."

What do I say to my friend (who is the parent of a young child) whose culture is very anti-LGBTQ?

- One thing you can do is ask your friend, or other adults in the child's life, to observe when their child is joyful and to see their joy. As important as statistics and resources are, joy is so important and can be more convincing!

Are there any resources or tips for how to talk about these topics with the Latinx community/in Spanish?

- Yes! CEC worked with Jennifer Ventura, a queer, Latinx early educator and trainer, Tania Cisneros-Ventura, a bilingual and Latinx family therapist with experience supporting diverse families, and Israel Cruz, a bilingual school counselor with expertise working with LGBTQ+ youth, to adapt the webinar to be create Rainbow Kids en Español. Rainbow Kids en Español is all the same information and content, adapted to be culturally relevant to a diverse Latinx community. All of the information and materials for Rainbow Kids en Español are on CEC's website.

I am an early educator in a very conservative community and I am afraid to even raise these issues for fear that this kind of material will be used to attack me. How do we navigate resistance?

- There is a personal conversation, and there is a professional space that teachers hold where no matter what their personal beliefs are, they are obligated to create a welcoming space for all students. As an education professional, you are allowed to remind your parents of that.

Frequently Asked Questions

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What are some tips for parents or educators on how to support kids when they come out, especially those at a younger age?

- It all goes back to listening to your child and who they say they are. Listen and reflect what your child tells you back to them. You don't always need to ask them, "Are you a boy or a girl," just use the language that they use! If your child calls themselves a kid, use that terminology and follow their lead.
- Coming out is a highly personal, and often scary, process. Don't try to turn it towards yourself, and keep the focus on your child and their feelings.
- For educators, children may not feel safe with their identity at home, so unless a parent lets you know that they know or the kid tells you that you can tell their parents, wait to bring it up with their parents.



ZOOM

05

Zoom Registration

How to Host a Rainbow Kids Webinar

Before the Webinar

- **Set Up Registration:** Use Zoom to set up registration. This ensures registrant information is stored in your account, allowing you to send reminder and follow-up emails. Only registered individuals will be allowed to join the webinar.
- **Recording Tips:** We recommend you do not record the webinar. State this clearly in your event description. Anonymity is important for many participants.
- Download the [Rainbow Kids Zoom Background](#).

Suggested Event Description

"Children form foundational concepts about gender, families, and love before the age of five. This training focuses on why and how to start conversations with young children about these topics and cultivate a more welcoming world for all. [Facilitator Name #1] and [Facilitator Name #2] offer age-appropriate information and guidance on topics such as understanding LGBTQ+ identities, practicing pronouns, and managing the messages children receive about gender and family, along with practical strategies to engage and support children as they explore who they are and who is in their world. This 90-minute webinar (including 30 min Q&A) is offered in English with closed captioning provided. This webinar will not be recorded."

By following these steps, you'll create a safe and effective virtual environment for your Rainbow Kids webinar.

Zoom Registration

05

Sample registrant questions/fields

Webinar Registration

First Name*

Last Name*

This field is required.

Email Address*

This field is required.

Please indicate which role best describes your perspective at this training:

What do you hope to take away from this training?

Do you have a question(s) you would like answered during this training?

Information you provide when registering will be shared with the [account owner](#) and host and can be used and shared by them in accordance with their Terms and Privacy Policy.

Register

After the Webinar

After the webinar, Zoom provides useful data for analysis. You can generate an attendee report to see who attended and for how long. Additionally, Zoom tools allow you to capture chat and Q&A discussion threads. We recommend using this data for internal analysis only and not for public sharing.

Zoom Registration

05

For participant surveys after the webinar, you can use Google Forms or Microsoft Forms, which can be accessed [here](#). If you prefer other survey tools, such as Survey Monkey, those are also fine. You can still make use of the suggested questions provided.

Zoom Tips & Tricks

05

Getting Ready for a Rainbow Kids Webinar

Hosting a Rainbow Kids webinar requires careful preparation to ensure a smooth and engaging experience. Here are the key steps and additional recommendations to get ready:

Why Use Zoom Webinars?

Zoom webinars are highly recommended for Rainbow Kids because the content was designed for a virtual setting. This format has proven effective, and many people are now familiar with Zoom's tools. Additionally, Zoom offers features for anonymous attendance and participation, which is crucial for some attendees.

Preparation Steps

First, refer to the [Zoom website](#) for the latest [tutorials](#) and account requirements, such as Zoom Pro, Business, Enterprise, or Education accounts. Note that hosting a webinar requires a specific subscription, which is more expensive than a standard Zoom meeting subscription.

Zoom Tips & Tricks

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Zoom uses the term “host” for the person running the webinar and “panelists” for presenters, whom we refer to as facilitators.

Recommendations for Scheduling Your Webinar

When scheduling your webinar, choose the webinar format instead of a meeting. Require participants to register, even if the event is free, as this gives you more control before, during, and after the event. Set up a text thread or group chat to facilitate communication between hosts and facilitators during the webinar. Have the host and panelists join 30 minutes early for sound checks and final preparations.

Staffing

We recommend having at least 2 panelists or facilitators and 1-2 behind-the-scenes hosts. These additional hosts can manage slides, play music, launch polls, and share useful information in the chat. Confirm roles well in advance to ensure everyone is prepared, as it would be very difficult for one person to deliver Rainbow Kids alone.

Technical Setup

To look your best on Zoom and other video conferencing platforms, follow these tips:

Camera & Computer Positioning: Position your camera at or just above eye level so you're looking slightly up into it. Avoid looking down into the camera. Elevate your computer with a stand or books if needed. Test your positioning using Zoom or another camera app.

Zoom Tips & Tricks

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Lighting: Ensure your face is well-lit. Avoid too much overhead or background light. Position a lamp just behind and to the side of your computer to light your face effectively. Consider how lighting changes throughout the day might affect your webinar and have artificial lighting if necessary.



During the Webinar

During the webinar, proper equipment setup is essential. You will need two computers and a cell phone:

First Computer: Use this to host the webinar. Clear your desktop in advance and set a Rainbow Kids image and name for when you're off-video. Assign panelists and hosts, enable chat and closed captioning, and remind your team to have phones available for texting and to silence their devices. Share your screen in full-screen mode with slides, mute yourself, and turn off your video. Use your mouse or keyboard arrows to change slides and keep the cursor over music controls for the first slide.

Second Computer: This computer is for monitoring and replying in chat and Q&A, as well as viewing the webinar as a participant. Disconnect the audio to avoid sound duplication. You can type in chat and Q&A if needed.

Cell Phone: Use your phone to text hosts and panelists before the event starts so that the thread is easy to find if questions or issues arise during the webinar.



Enhancing Your Webinar Experience

In addition to the above steps, consider the following tips for a more engaging and effective webinar:

Zoom Tips & Tricks

05

- **Interactive Elements:** Use polls, quizzes, and interactive questions to engage participants. This keeps the audience involved and attentive.
- **Practice Sessions:** Conduct practice runs with your team to ensure everyone is familiar with their roles and the technology. This helps identify and resolve potential issues before the live event.
- **Technical Support:** Have a designated technical support person available during the webinar to address any technical issues participants may encounter.
- **Clear Instructions:** At the beginning of the webinar, provide clear instructions on how to use the Zoom features (e.g., chat, Q&A, raising hands) to ensure participants can fully engage with the content.
- **Engaging Visuals:** Use visually appealing slides and multimedia to keep the presentation dynamic and interesting.
- **Post-Webinar Follow-Up:** Send a follow-up email to participants with a summary of the key points, additional resources, and a feedback survey. This helps reinforce the content and gather valuable insights for future improvements.

By following these steps and incorporating these tips, you'll ensure a successful and engaging Rainbow Kids webinar.



PLANNING GUIDE

06

Once you have completed the orientation process, you can begin working on your plan to share Rainbow Kids with your staff, parents or community. Here is a generic timeline.

3+ MONTHS BEFORE WEBINAR

Identify facilitators

Read this Facilitator's Guide!

Identify any local partners (preschools, early childhood advocates, local pride centers, community college early childhood instructors, etc.) that might want to partner with you in outreach and/or participation

Two months before:

Finalize date and time of webinar

Set up event registration (Zoom recommended; refer to registration suggestions for more info)

Personalize outreach materials (templates provided) with date/time and registration info

Schedule run-through with facilitators

Identify any additional resources/links you may want to share in the follow up email

One month before:

Launch outreach campaign (social media, email, local newsletters)

Remind local partners to share outreach materials

Personalize evaluation form

Two weeks before:

Re-share outreach materials via newsletters, social media, email, etc.

Remind local partners to share outreach materials

Run-through with facilitators and hosts - test EVERYTHING (audio, slides, polls, etc.)

Share the Zoom background that hosts and facilitators can use during the webinar

Share registrant information with facilitators (e.g. attendee count, questions submitted)

Planning Guide

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One week before:

- Re-share outreach materials via newsletters, social media, email, etc.
- Prep participant emails (reminders, follow-up)
- Prep resource materials/one pagers for sending post-training
 - Google doc for resources/one pagers

One day before:

- Update your Zoom account with the Rainbow Kids background you will use during the webinar

Day of webinar:

- Clear your actual desk and computer desktop so that your physical and online spaces are uncluttered so that you can focus (and so that if you have to do screen sharing, others don't see personal email, etc.).
- Ask Zoom hosts and facilitators to join 30 minutes before the webinar to check sound, etc.
- See Zoom tips and tricks for more detailed instructions

Day after webinar:

- Send post-webinar email with additional resources + request to complete evaluation

Post-webinar:

- Collect/summarize evaluation results and share within your organization and/or your Rainbow Kids learning community
- Share any of your own questions, successes or reflections with Rainbow Kids learning community

Post-Webinar Evaluation

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At the end of the webinar, invite participants to complete a brief evaluation form to provide feedback on their experience, what was most helpful and what can be improved. This data is useful for you and can also

Post-Webinar Evaluation

06

inform future updates to Rainbow Kids content as you share feedback with your Learning Community.

Suggested Post-Webinar Survey Questions

- What did you enjoy about the training?
- What improvements would you suggest for the training?
- What additional information, training or resources (if any) would be helpful?

You may add additional evaluation questions of your own! Remember that the key to getting folks to open and complete a survey is keeping it short and sweet!



QUICK LINKS ACCESS

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One Pagers

- [The Basics](#)
- [Simple Ways to Discuss](#)
- [Nature vs Nurture](#)
- [Diverse Families](#)
- [Public Health](#)

Videos

- [Full Presentation](#)
- [Q&A](#)
- [Intersectionality](#)
- [Faith & Culture](#)
- [Friends & Family](#)
- [College & Adult Ed](#)

Facilitation & Instruction Guides

- [General Facilitation Guide \(for presentations or webinars\)](#)
- [Instructor Guide for College & Adult Ed](#)

Spanish Resources

- [Slides](#)
- [Script](#)
- [One pagers](#)
- [Videos](#)
- [Online Resource library](#)

Presentation Materials

- [Slides](#)
- [Script](#)

Online Resources Library

- [Link to partner organizations, hotlines, reading lists and more.](#)



RESOURCES

Find resources including info sheets, support organizations & LGBTQ+ inclusive books to continue practicing and learning.

A project of



APPENDIX

08

Definitions and Terms

These definitions, terms and acronym explanations are from organizations that provide a wide variety of information, resources and support for the LGBTQ+ community.

PFLAG General Glossary of Terms

Sexual Orientation

- Emotional, romantic, or sexual feelings toward other people. People who are straight experience these feelings primarily for people of a gender different from their own. People who are gay or lesbian experience these feelings primarily for people of the same gender; people who are bisexual experience these feelings for people of different genders, though not always at the same time; and people who are asexual experience no sexual attraction at all. One's sexual activity does not define who one is with regard to one's sexual orientation; it is the attraction that helps determine orientation.

Gender Identity

- One's deeply held core sense of being a girl/woman, boy/man, some of both, or neither. One's gender identity does not always correspond to biological sex. Awareness of gender identity is usually experienced as early as 18 months old and reinforced in adolescence.

Gender Expression

- The manner in which a person communicates about gender to others through external means such as clothing, appearance, or mannerisms. This communication may be conscious or subconscious and may or may not reflect their gender identity or sexual orientation. While most people's understandings of gender expressions relate to masculinity and femininity, there are countless combinations that may incorporate both masculine and feminine expressions—or neither—through androgynous expressions. The important thing to recognize and

Definitions and Terms

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respect is that an individual's gender expression does not automatically imply their gender identity and that every gender expression is valid.

The acronym "LGBTQ+"

- Lesbian—A woman who is sexually, romantically, emotionally, or otherwise attracted to other women.
- Gay—An adjective that describes people who are sexually, romantically, emotionally, or otherwise attracted to people of the same gender.
- Bisexual—A person who is sexually, romantically, emotionally, or otherwise attracted to people with the same or different genders/gender identities as themselves. Sometimes referred to as bi or bi+.
- The above need not have had any sexual experience; it is the attraction that determines orientation.
- Transgender—An adjective that describes a person's gender identity that does not match their assigned sex at birth. This word is also used as an umbrella term to describe those who transcend conventional expectations of gender identity or expression, such as people who are Genderqueer, which refers to a person whose gender identity goes beyond strictly female or male.
- Queer—A term used by some—particularly youth—to describe themselves or their community. Reclaimed from its earlier pejorative use, the term is valued by some for its defiance and by others who find it an appropriate term to describe more fluid identities. Due to its varying meanings, Queer should only be used when self-identifying or quoting someone who self-identifies as queer.
- Questioning, also represented by the "Q," describes those in a process of discovery and exploration about their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- The "+" refers to other identities within the LGBTQ community that don't fit neatly into the L, G, B, T, or Q, such as asexual, aromantic, and more.

Continues on next page.

Definitions and Terms

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Kid-Friendly Glossary for Elementary Students from the Human Rights Campaign

Gender

Cisgender: When your gender identity (how you feel) is the same as what doctors/midwives assigned to you when you were born (girl/boy or sex assigned at birth).

Gender Binary: A way of seeing gender as two distinct and opposite groups—girl and boy. This idea doesn't include all the ways we can have a gender identity and express our gender.

Gender Expansive: Some people feel that the traditional ways of being a "boy" or "girl" do not fit for them. They live their lives showing that there are many ways to be a girl, boy, both or neither.

Gender Expression: People express themselves in many ways, such as through clothes or hairstyles. Sometimes people think that these things go with certain genders, but really you cannot guess someone's gender or pronouns from how they look. In our school we respect that every person is unique and different, and we don't tease or bully anyone about their personal expression.

Gender Identity: How you feel. Girl, boy, both or neither. Everyone has a gender identity.

Intersex: An umbrella term that refers to people who are born with bodies that are naturally different from what is traditionally considered female or male. (This occurs in about 2% of babies born, similar to the percentage for redheads.)

Non-Binary: People who do not feel like the words "girl" or "boy" fits. They may feel like both or neither. They sometimes use pronouns such as they, them, theirs.

Definitions and Terms

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Sex Assigned At Birth: When a baby is born, a doctor or midwife looks at the baby's body/anatomy and says they are a boy, girl or intersex.

Transgender or Trans: When your gender identity (how you feel) is different than what doctors/midwives assigned to you when you were born (girl/boy or sex assigned at birth).

Who You Love

Bisexual: People who love people of more than one gender. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say people who love or are attracted to people of more than one gender.]

Gay: People who love people of the same gender. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say people who love or are attracted to people of the same gender.]

Heterosexual: People who identify as women who only love [or are attracted to] people who identify as men. Also, people who identify as men who only love [or are attracted to] people who identify as women.

Lesbian: People who love people of the same gender. Two women. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say people who love or are attracted to people of the same gender.]

Pansexual: People who love people of any gender. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say people who love or are attracted to people of any gender.]

Sexual Orientation: Who you love. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say who you love or are attracted to.]

Gender and Who You Love

LGBTQ+: Acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer people plus community members who use different language to describe identity.

Queer: People use this word as a way to identify with and celebrate people

Definitions and Terms

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of all gender identities and all the ways people love each other. When used in a mean way, it is a word that hurts.

Another useful glossary of kid-friendly LGBTQ+ terms is from [Welcoming Schools](#).

Special Thanks

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- Hannah Yanow, consultant
- Ed Condon, Region 9 Head Start Association



TERMS & CONDITIONS

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Usage Agreements & Understandings

1. Rainbow Kids content and materials are copyrighted by Community Equity Collaborative.
2. This content cannot be altered or reproduced in any way that misrepresents its primary objectives, themes or messages.
3. Rainbow Kids is designed to provide age-appropriate information for the parents, caregivers, educators and community members who engage with young children. This content is not intended to be delivered directly to young children.
4. Community Equity Collaborative is not liable for any responses individuals or organizations may encounter as a result of distributing these materials.



SOURCES

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All Children, Including Cisgender Children, are Harmed by Rigid Ideals of Masculinity and Femininity

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Family Acceptance in Adolescence and the Health of LGBT Young Adults (Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing); Health Disparities Facing Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Youth Are Not Inevitable (Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics); Mental Health of Transgender Children Who Are Supported in Their Identities (Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics)

<https://www.uofmhealth.org/health-library/te7288>

From <https://genderspectrum.org/articles/supportive-parenting> quoting this study Family Acceptance in Adolescence and the Health of LGBT Young Adults (Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing)

Local SOGIE trainings for parents currently focus on children ages 10 years and above; resources for caregivers of very young children (such as Gender Wheel) are limited and generally target child-serving professionals (educators, service providers, etc.).

<https://pflag.org/glossary/>

<https://welcomingschools.org/resources/definitions-lgbtq-elementary-school>