

TEACHING GUIDE

Up4Diversity: Empowering Young People and Youth Workers to Become Active Upstanders in the Prevention of Violence Towards LGBTIQ+ People in the Digital Era



This Didactic Guide was funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020)

Agreement No 881918 - UP4Diversity.

Up4Diversity: Empowering Young People and Youth Workers to Become Active Upstanders in the Prevention of Violence Towards LGBTIQ+ People in the Digital Era



Disclaimer

"The project "Up4Diversity: Empowering Young People and Youth Workers to Become Active Upstanders in the Prevention of Violence Towards LGBTIQ+ People in the Digital Era" has been funded by the REC programme of the European Union. The content of these training materials is the sole responsibility of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili and the Up4Diversity Consortium, and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information published here".

INDEX

Introduction

Content of training materials

Learning method

Module 1

Introduces and explains the reality of people and LGBTIQ+ youth, with some concepts and a European strategic framework.

Module 2

Describes harassment and violence against young LGBTIQ+ people in digital contexts, deepening in the unique characteristics of these environments.

Module 3

It is at the core of our training, as it explains the “bystander intervention” approach (upstanders) defending the victims of LGBTIQ+ violence.

Module 4

Provides an overview of the social reasons that explain why interpersonal violence persists, and how to create a preventive socialisation in educational settings.

Module 5

Describes how community participation in the development and accountability of norms can help prevent violence.

Module 6

Collects other actions and strategies that have shown some success in creating safe spaces and preventing violence.

Introduction

Violence and discrimination in formal and non-formal educational institutions for young people is a worrying reality, and it affects vulnerable groups, such as LGBTIQ+ youth, most profoundly. **The European project Up4Diversity, funded by the European Commission's REC programme**, has developed these evidence-based pedagogical modules to train people who work with youth to acquire knowledge and skills on how to successfully contribute to stopping and preventing LGBTIQ+phobic violence in their educational contexts.

Content style

As can be seen in the modules, we are in favour of the theoretical content because those who work with young people have the right to know the **scientific evidence that supports the educational actions that they implement**, in order to avoid mechanically applying practices **without any endorsement of social impact**. As the scientific evidence suggests, violence and bullying cannot be overcome with isolated activities or actions; on the contrary, only a holistic and community-based change that permeates all spaces and moments of the educational institution can have a long-term effect in creating safer spaces for LGBTIQ+ youth and for all people, spaces where violence is successfully combated and discouraged.

Implementation of the contents

These modules are not intended for professionals to directly transfer the contents and activities to young people. Both are proposed to be used among educators in professional training spaces.

The application of the educational actions proposed in this training is not intended to take time away from the curricular contents. The application of this evidence can, in fact, contribute to improving the working environment in which instrumental learning will be enhanced.

Learning method

This document can be read individually, although we suggest holding **Pedagogical Dialogic Gatherings (PDG)**¹ between professionals and adults in the educational institution in different sessions: this successful training action consists of reading the agreed material, based on scientific evidence, with the intention of sharing the paragraphs chosen by each person, as well as the arguments that emerge from them with the other participants in the discussion.

In each module of this training there are proposals of dynamics to further study and deepen the knowledge explained. The aim is to help create **spaces for dialogical reflection around the practice**, always taking theory as a basis to give meaning and help to better understand the actions of and with young people. These activities are best

¹ Further information on this action can be found on the following website: Roca-Campos, E.; Renta-Davids, A.I.; Marhuenda-Fluixá, F.; Flecha, R. (2021). Educational Impact Evaluation of Professional Development of In-Service Teachers: The Case of the Dialogic Pedagogical Gatherings at Valencia "On Giants' Shoulders". *Sustainability*, 13, 4275. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13084275>

The legislative framework for LGBTIQ+ human rights is then explained, explaining how it has evolved. At the European level, the great difference in gender equality between countries is explained, as well as the efforts led by the President and the first **EU LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy for the years 2020-2025**. It explains the need for active and proactive policies at all levels, from European decision-makers in Brussels to those running local schools and sports clubs. Education plays an essential role in raising awareness, understanding and inclusion of the LGBTIQ+ community.



Module 2. Harassment and violence against LGBTIQ+ youth in the digital age

This module describes bullying and violence towards LGBTIQ+ youth in digital contexts, delving into the unique characteristics of these environments that make it easy for cases to go unaddressed if no action is taken.

To do so, first of all it is recalled that bullying is currently conceived as a social phenomenon and not as an interpersonal problem, so the emphasis is on the groups and environments that make violence take place and perpetuate it. The distinctive characteristics of LGBTIQ+ youth are used to target them. Drawing on data from the European LGBTIQ+ macro-survey, **between 7-15% report experiencing online harassment, with the youngest age group (15-17 years) experiencing more online harassment (15%)** than older age groups. In the case of the youngest respondents (15-17 years), 51% of the cases of harassment were perpetrated by people with whom they had some kind of relationship, i.e., at school, high school, university, or other formal or non-formal settings.



Adults, whether professionals or family members, often consider "digital" bullying and other types of malicious digital behaviour to be less serious than their "real" counterparts. However, this is not the case, and in fact the constant digital exposure and presence means that bullying may never stop: it is easy and relatively consequence-free for perpetrators, while at the same time having the potential for great social reach. Distancing or anonymity are two factors that explain a false "bravery" and a lower level of social empathy.

Module 3. Bystander Intervention: Bystander Intervention. Upstanders

This is the core of our training, as it explains the approach to **intervention by upstanders** who advocate for victims of LGBTIQ+ violence.

Some of the reasons why bystanders do not intervene are the bystander effect, trivialisation and normalisation of violence, misconceptions about friendship, shyness or shame, fear of retaliation (isolating violence), lack of education and dialogue about what violence is, the consequences of not taking a stand and the importance of doing so, and lack of clear and successful tools and strategies. In any case, the consequences of the violence suffered, coupled with the lack of support, are dire for the victims.

The module underlines the importance that **educational communities (teachers, educators, staff, young people, families, etc.)** can be trained to become allies of the LGBTIQ+ community and intervene in situations of bullying and violence. In the face of a violent situation, there are different bystanders: those who assist or reinforce the bullies, those who remain passive or oblivious; and those who defend: upstanders. **There are only two positions: to be part of the solution, or part of the problem.** It is

therefore essential to get a passive majority to become defenders. The consequences are positive for both the victims, the defenders, and the culture of the human group in question.



Creating a safer climate, but also training people with *upstander* attitudes in specific action protocols, facilitates their positioning and action. The hypothetical scenarios and the dialogues around them are an effective way of increasing knowledge, confidence, and empathy. Among the *upstander* strategies, **reactive strategies, once violence is happening or has happened, as well as preventive actions, are explained.** Among the *reactive* actions are those initiated by the **Green Dot** programme: **distracting, delegating, addressing the violent person, documenting, or comforting.** On the other hand, many preventive actions are presented both on an individual and professional level, as well as on an institutional level.

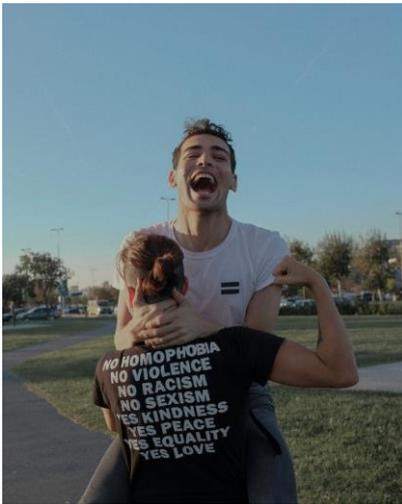
Module 4. Preventive socialisation of gender-based violence

This section provides an overview of the social reasons why interpersonal and power-based violence persists and how to create preventive socialisation in educational settings.

Preventing violence against LGBTIQ+ youth requires deep and constant work. Violence can only be stopped by going deeper into its causes. The interpersonal conflicts that are made visible and acted upon are the tip of the iceberg, and at the base is a system of power relations, gender-based violence and affective-sexual socialisation processes. **Violence, risk, and problems**



are massively linked through social interactions with attraction. This means that people who treat others badly are not alone, and almost always have a social circle that reinforces their attitudes.



Several keys that contribute to preventing violence are explained in detail in this module: **love** and ideal relationships; **the language of desire**; **New Alternative Masculinities**; **zero tolerance** against violence; **transformative friendship**; **consent**; and **protecting those who defend**.

Module 5. Community Engagement: The Dialogic Model of Violence Prevention and Resolution

This module describes how community participation in norms development and accountability can help prevent violence.

Changing socialisation processes is only possible if all agents are involved and act coherently. The whole community (including families, the neighbourhood, social entities, etc.) plays a key role in improving youth coexistence. Research has shown that, of the possibilities for community participation in educational institutions, the most effective forms for youth's success are the decisive, evaluative, and educational participation, i.e., **participating in some of the institution's regular educational activities and actions**, as well as attending particular training opportunities.

To make this participation possible, some resources can facilitate it and above all ensure the diversity of participants. Some of these keys are flexibility in schedules, spaces and interests; encouraging the participation of those people and families who traditionally have not had a voice in these spaces; preparing the meetings well so that they are productive and not only informative, but so that decisions are made and learning takes place in them; and encouraging everyone to have the opportunity to speak or contribute in some way.

The dialogic model of conflict prevention and resolution is explained below. It is based on dialogue as the main tool for overcoming inequalities and violence. **Consensus on the rules of coexistence by all parties involved, especially students,** is key. The idea is to overcome positions of power and open a path towards more egalitarian relations. The effectiveness of decisions or agreements does not depend so much on their content, but mainly on the process that led to them: consensus. In order to start the process of creating a coexistence norm, some criteria must be met: **it must be directly related to an important aspect of young people's lives; it must be frequently broken, even if it has the verbal support of the whole society; and it must respond to a behaviour that can be eradicated.** In order to make a rule concrete, the steps to follow are explained, which involve the whole community and entail training and constant dialogue.



Module 6. Successful strategies for combating violence against LGBTQ+ people and achieving social impact

Let's stop
bullying
together!



This module brings together other actions and strategies that have shown some success in creating safe spaces and preventing violence. Some of them are more linked to *bystander intervention* or are more directly targeted at LGBTQ+ individuals or young people. They can be good examples of other practices that are being implemented, that follow a rigorous basis and that show good signs of social impact in reducing bullying or violence. Specifically, the **Gay-Straight Alliances**; the **LARM** teaching material; the Dutch project "**Doing it for optimal impact**"; and the **KiVa** anti-bullying programme are presented.

