



*GENDER*  
*DIVERSE*

School  
Holiday Program  
REPORT 2015



by Anoushka Wootton and Erik Ly  
**thedrum** Youth Services  
[anoushka.wootton@ds.org.au](mailto:anoushka.wootton@ds.org.au)  
[erik.ly@ds.org.au](mailto:erik.ly@ds.org.au)



***“It's really hard to be me at times, and I do need support and understanding people to listen to me.”***

**- GDHP Participant, 2015**



## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Why GD HP? .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Funding, objectives and outcomes .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Recruitment of Youth Peer Leader .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Consultation, planning, promotion .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Caregivers' Info session.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Gender Diverse Holiday Program.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Participant demographics.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Barriers to attendance .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>The activities .....</b>	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
What worked well/What was good? .....	14
What we would do differently? .....	14
What YP told us .....	15
What caregivers told us .....	16
<b>What trans and gender diverse youth would like workers/teachers/parents/caregivers to know? .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Where to from here .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix i .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Appendix ii .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Appendix iii .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix iv .....</b>	<b>24</b>

## Executive Summary

This report will describe the design and facilitation of **the drum's** piloting of the Gender Diverse Holiday Program (GDHP). In addition, this report is a platform for the voices of the youth participants, as well as the voices of their parents and caregivers, to be heard. Throughout the peer-led program, the young people and their families were invited to share their voice in order to influence future program creation and delivery for young people with trans and gender diverse (TGD) experience and their caregivers and families. A Victorian State Government HEY Grant initiative, the GDHP was designed to address the gap in service provision for age-appropriate, service-supported, family-focused, pro-social activities specific to young people with TGD experience and their families.

Peer-led programming is recommended as essential to the engagement of young people with trans and gender diverse experience (From Blues to Rainbows, 2014). Peer-led programming offers the opportunity to develop the skill and capacity of both the peer leader and the peer leader's community, contributing to their belief and actual ability to influence their environment. Moreover, such opportunities enable young people to develop confidence and resilience within their communities. In recognition of this, a young person with TGD experience was employed as a Youth Peer Leader to lead the GDHP from consultation through to evaluation.

Recent research highlights the direct correlation between positive social connectedness and the mental health and wellbeing for TGD young people (From Blues to Rainbows, 2014). For young people with TGD experience, the ability and wish to be socially connected can be complicated by transphobic discrimination and cis-sexism. The Youth Peer Leader, supported by members of **the drum's** team, designed a program that provided activities in a safe and comfortable space for young people with TGD experience aged between the ages of 11 and 17 years, to build social connections with other young people with similar experiences.

Overwhelmingly, young people and their families let us know that the GDHP was a positive, affirming experience. Moreover, young people let us know that they find it difficult to connect with other young people with similar experiences, and that they wanted more social connection activities. Caregivers and parents disclosed concern around isolation and the mental health and wellbeing of their child. They also expressed their support for the program. Some young people identified as having unsupportive caregivers/parents who acted as active barriers to their attendance of the program. Consequently, assertive engagement of families and communities, and provision of pathways for education and support is vital to these young people accessing the support and health care that they need.

The pilot run for **the drum's** GDHP has highlighted the importance of supporting, not only the young person, but also their family as a whole. Further consultation and collaboration with peer-support groups for the families and caregivers of TGD young people will be integral to the process of building future family-focused programming. Consultation undertaken during the GDHP supports the idea of a forum for the family and caregivers of young people with TGD experience to build connection and gain vital information in support of their young people.

## Why the GDHP?

The Gender Diverse Holiday Program was designed to address a gap in service specific to young people with trans and gender diverse experience to participate in supported social connection opportunities.

Social connection is acknowledged as an essential influencing factor for the wellbeing of young people. For young people with a trans and gender diverse (TGD) experience, the ability and wish to be socially connected can be complicated by transphobic discrimination and cis-sexism. Recent research has highlighted the direct correlation between positive social connectedness and the mental health and wellbeing for TGD young people (From Blues to Rainbows, 2014).

The From Blues to Rainbows report (2014) offers a series of recommendations for the support of TGD young people, including the need:

- To recognize the unique needs and challenges faced by TGD young people in comparison to their cisgender lesbian, gay, and bisexual peers;
- For creation of safe spaces that invites and supports TGD young people to bring their voices to community;
- For provision of education and peer-led support for parents and caregivers of TGD young people.

Consultation with young people from the TGD community yielded the understanding that many social connection opportunities for young people with a TGD experience could be considered age inappropriate for the younger cohort (12-17years). Furthermore, the social connection activities that are attended by 12-17 year olds are, firstly, not TGD specific (LGBTQI inclusive), and secondly, youth-led (as opposed to being supported by trained professionals).

Support for young people with a TGD experience has been described as highly medicalised and pathologising. The majority of services that are funded specifically for TGD young people and their families are medically based. Furthermore, we know that young people and their families are often waiting approximately 12 months to gain an initial appointment at these funded clinics. These appointments are currently the only pathway for young people with a TGD experience to gain needed healthcare support.

**the drum's** Gender Diverse Holiday Program was an initiative driven by community need. To our knowledge, no service has provided a holiday program that is specifically for trans and gender diverse young people.

***“I liked meeting new people who were experiencing similar issues, and meeting other people who had gone through it, and are feeling better.” - GDHP Participant, 2015***





***“I know my identity better than anyone - listen and try to understand” - GDHP Participant, 2015***

## **Funding, objectives and outcomes**

The Gender Diverse Holiday Program (GDHP) was funded by the Victorian State Government HEY Grant initiative. The **main objectives** of the GDHP was to:

- Employ Youth Peer Leader of trans/gender diverse experience
- Provide training to the Youth Peer leader assisting in development of skills and capacity to design and facilitate GDHP
- Provide a space for young people to be supported in building social connection
- Provide a safe space for young people to express and explore their identity

- Provide pathways to further support and social connection
- Engage families and caregivers of young people and provide information about family support and education opportunities
- Provide a space where young people can have fun together!

**Primary outcomes** of the GDHP include:

- Young people of TGD experience have positive service engagement-experience
- Young people of TGD experience have positive social experience
- Young people of TGD experience and their caregivers are more connected to information and support opportunities
- Young people of TGD experience and their caregivers experience increase in resilience
- Young people of TGD experience feel more socially connected to their peers
- Increased positive connection between **the drum** and TGD community of young people
- Young person of TGD experience gains positive and supported employment experience
- Young people of TGD experience have increased positive influence over their environment

## Recruitment of Youth Peer Leader

Peer-led programming is widely understood to be key in effectively engaging young people. Peer-led programming offers the opportunity to develop the skill and capacity of both the peer leader and the peer leader's community, contributing to the belief and actual ability to influence their environment. Moreover, young people develop confidence and resilience within their communities. Recent research has recommended peer led programming to be essential in the engagement of young people with trans and gender diverse experience (From Blues to Rainbows, 2014).

The GDHP Youth Peer Leader was recruited as part of **the drum's** pre-existing Youth Peer Leader program. **the drum's** Youth Peer Leader program is an affirmative employment program aimed at developing leadership and creating opportunities of influence for local young people. Youth Peer Leaders are provided full in-house training on topics such as communication, facilitation, project planning and management, consultation, youth participation and inclusive practice.

Recruitment processes involved assertive engagement of TGD communities promoting employment opportunity in multiple spaces including youth-led organisations such as Ygender and Minus18, education institutions, **the drum's** Youth Services networks, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex service networks such as Rainbow Network. The recruited peer leader was given a full induction into the wider service, and then experienced one month paid intensive training with other recruited peer leaders. The youth peer leaders have described this training process as beneficial noting that they have felt able to apply their developed skills outside of their role as youth peer leader, within their respective communities. Youth Peer Leaders are offered ongoing support and guidance, with a particular focus on development and creation of pathways for the young leader's next steps.

Youth Peer Leaders share the training and development with their various communities, as they utilize and share their developed skills and capacities. Additionally, employing a peer leader from a particular community provides a pathway to connect and engage with that target community. Importantly, recruiting a young person with TGD experience acknowledges their unique knowledge and expertise gained from their lived experience which can be utilized to ensure safe and positive forms of engagement and support.





***“It's important for us to interact with each other (GD young people)” - GDHP Participant, 2015***

## **Consultation, planning, and promotion**

Peer led processes create spaces for young people to lead the decision-making process. **the drum** Youth Service worked to create an environment from which the Youth Peer Leader was empowered, via training, support and guidance. This enabled the Youth Peer Leader to direct and facilitate the GDHP from planning through to evaluation, and recommendations for next steps.

**The project's consultation occurred at four main points during the program.** Firstly, the consultation process began prior to the genesis of the GDHP through conversations with youth led TGD group Ygender and the Royal Children's Hospital who highlighted the lack of age appropriate social support services for young people with TGD experience aged below 16 years. Many peer led support services are volunteer-led and/or attracting an older cohort of young people (above 16 years). Secondly, employment of a TGD community member as Youth Peer Leader allowed the GDHP to be guided by insider knowledge, with the Peer Leader offering insight into best practice throughout the project's lifespan. Thirdly, potential participants were consulted via survey on preference of

activities that would occur at the program. Fourthly, ongoing consultation of participants and their caregivers occurred via feedback surveys and a formal consultation process with **the drum's** other Youth Peer Leaders acting as youth consultants. Examples of the young person's feedback survey, the caregiver's feedback survey and the structured questions asked by Youth Peer Leaders is provided in Appendix i, ii, and iii.

**Planning for the GDHP was led by the drum's Youth Peer Leader.** The process of registration, splitting of age groups, design of consent and registration forms, exploration of appropriate venues, risk management, and development of ideas and content for the GDHP activities was all led by the Peer Leader, with ongoing support and supervisions from **the drum**. Importantly, facilitator guides were created for the pilot program to ensure the program can be easily picked up, adjusted according to needs, and facilitated again in the future. An example of these facilitator guides is provided in Appendix iv.

**The GDHP promotion was targeted to areas** where young people with a TGD experience aged below 18 years may be found. Consideration was also given to where young people who are yet to connect with other TGD specific social supports might best be engaged. Social media was key to promotion, with a specific page created for the program. Social media also allowed engagement with the parents and caregivers of young people with a TGD experience through peer-support pages specific to connecting parents and caregivers of TGD young people. The GDHP was promoted to and by local to Melbourne queer youth support groups, and schools and youth services were also assertively engaged. The Royal Children's Hospital, provider of health care for TGD young people, also referred many young people and their families to the GDHP. Posters were designed to attract both the young people and their caregiver's attention and were circulated though out **the drum's** networks. An important part of the engagement process involved the facilitation of an info session designed for parents and caregivers of young people to find out more about the GDHP.

***"We are human, not a subject or minority group"- GDHP***  
**Participant, 2015**

## **Caregiver's info session**

The caregiver's info session was designed to provide opportunity for caregivers and parents to get to know more about the program. This step was designed in order to generate a sense of safety around the type of program that their child might be attending. The info session also intentionally brought together caregivers who might be experiencing similar circumstances creating opportunity for peer support. Furthermore the info session provided a space where caregivers could obtain further support information for their child and family. **the drum** Youth Service also utilized the info session as an opportunity to develop rapport with the caregivers of young people in order to create support pathways for the young people and families into family services. Surprisingly, caregivers who attended the info session had travelled considerable distances to the Carlton (inner city) venue, including from Geelong, Pakenham, Frankston, and Hurstbridge.

The info session provided insight into the different levels of knowledge and support caregivers had, and that all caregivers were very interested in connecting with other caregivers of young people with TGD experience. An unexpected positive from the info session was the opportunity to create a morning tea for parents and caregivers of the GDHP participants. A parent volunteered their time, and with support of **the drum**, facilitated the morning tea at the same venue as the GDHP, however in a separate space. Caregivers let us know that they exchanged contact details.



## ***"It is great"*** – GDHP Participant, 2015

### **The Gender Diverse Holiday Program**

#### **Participant demographics**

All participants were aged between 11 and 17 years of age. Although the program was designed for young people 12 years and above, an exception was made for a young person who was aged slightly below our targeted age. It is understood by the **the drum** that the availability of pro-social activities for young people with a TGD experience aged under 12 years is extremely limited, if not non-existent. Young people were diverse in background, identified backgrounds including Maltese, Australian-Jewish, Australian-Indian, Bosnian, and Anglo-Australian. Significantly, most young people travelled a considerable distance to attend the GDHP (located in inner-north Melbourne) with young people travelling between 1 and 3 hours via car and public transport from the north-west, south-west, south-east, and north of Melbourne. In relation to gender identity, most participants identified as trans male, with some young people identifying with non-binary identities and some young people identifying as trans female. Participant mental health status varied, with some young people identified being diagnosed with mental illness, with others reporting experiences of symptoms of depression and anxiety. Young people reported poor mental health outcomes while waiting to have access to appropriate healthcare. One GDHP participant reported recently dropping out of school due to deterioration of mental health whilst waiting to have access to healthcare.







**How did the young people hear about the GDHP?** Participants let us know that they heard about the program through the Royal Children's Hospital, through social connections, from their parent/caregivers support group, and from social media.

***“That it's not always easy and no one knows what's truly going on inside my head but me.”***

**– GDHP Participant, 2015**

### **Barriers to attendance**

Most participants who attended the program identified having at least one parent/caregiver who is supportive of their gender identity. However some young people identified their parents/caregivers as unsupportive of their gender identity as acting as active barriers to their attendance of the program. Of these young people, either they were only able to attend one event without their parent/caregiver's knowledge, or did not show up to the program at all. Young people below 16 years required parental/guardian consent. This operated as a barrier to some young people attending the GDHP. Additionally, young people's poor mental health operated as a barrier, with many young people who had registered and identified with experiencing poor mental health did not show up to the program activities that they had registered for, despite assertive engagement. We believe that these barriers highlight the importance of engaging the family as a whole in order to break down barriers to



young people's attendance of social connection activities. In some cases, family and community education will be essential to young people with a TGD experience receiving appropriate social and healthcare support.

***"It rocks"***  
– GDHP Participant, 2015



### **The activities**

The GDHP involved three main events including age specific activity days and an all ages (11-17yrs) excursion day. A facilitator guide was created for each day-session (examples of this can be found in Appendix v). All activities were voted for during participant registration, with the days involving activities such as art and creative tasks, social connection activities, Stand Out at school discussions with guests from Safe Schools Coalition, love and relationships, and awesome things about being trans and gender diverse. Our excursion day involved a trip on public transport to a local laser tag and arcade games room (as voted by young people). All three events were spread across the holidays to maximize enjoyment and attendance. The facilitation of all three day programs was assisted by a volunteer from the community who played an invaluable role as older mentor with TGD experience to young people.

### What worked well?

The evaluation and feedback from young people, staff and volunteer, identified the following successes and strengths of the GDHP:

- Opportunity and support for social connections
- Gender neutral cubical toilet sign
- Safe space discussion at each activity day
- Pronouns discussion
- Name and pronouns tag
- Young people got along and interact with each other
- Created support pathways for young people and their families
- Safe space for peer education and discussion about gender diversity
- Space allowed facilitators to develop meaningful rapport with young people
- Support for young people to have fun in a safe public space
- Separate age groups for the activity days
- Events were spreading across the holiday period
- TGD specific program
- Young people had fun!

***“Not everyone is the same.”*** – GDHP Participant, 2015

### What we would do differently

The GDHP was pretty great (☺), however, there were definitely a few things that we might do things slightly differently next time.

Firstly, although we used several methods of consultation, we believe that extending this process would be beneficial to the program. We would ensure more time for community consultation via focus groups with both young people and their parents/caregivers for the purpose to not only ensure the program events are led by the needs and wishes of the attendees, but also to build trust and rapport with young people and their families to assist buy in and pathways to attendance.

Secondly, collaboration with youth-led queer groups and organisations in the planning, facilitation and the evaluation of the program could also assist the program on many levels including attendance, increased opportunity for mentoring, and peer leadership opportunities.

Thirdly, young people let us know that they would like increased number of structured activities around social connection and activities. We did facilitate structured ice breaking activities, however, we noticed that young people appeared to connect with more ease through side-by-side play, assisting a sense of comfortableness with each other. Next time we plan to have fun excursion type activities as ice breaker, followed by structured incursion social activities, with a celebratory excursion at the end.

Fourthly, we noticed that the majority of our young people were of masculine identities. This highlights the potential need for further assertive engagement of feminine and non-binary identities, and addressing possible barriers to participation.



## What young people told us

We let young people know that the GDHP was a pilot program and that we were super keen to hear their thoughts about the program and other things so their voice could influence future programmatic supports available to them. The young people told us:

- They would love to have an on-going Gender Diverse Holiday Program
- That it was good to have a program specific to young people with TGD experience
- They would love a camp
- It was good to have a space to build social connections
- Older role models with TGD experience assisted in their own sense of hope for the future
- It was good to have a safe space for expression and exploration
- Gender neutral toilets were a huge positive
- They had a bunch of fun
- They expressed negative impact of long wait times to have access to appropriate health care
- School was a negative experience for many young people
- Of their difficulty in being able to be themselves
- Difficulty in meeting other young people with TGD experience
- The GDHP was a positive affirming experience

In addition, we invited young people to share one thing that they might tell their teacher/worker/parent about trans and gender diversity if they had the opportunity. We have inserted quotes of the young people's answers throughout this report.





***“It’s not wrong, I am not alone.” – GDHP Participant, 2015***



## **What caregivers told us**

Caregivers and parents have expressed their strong support for the GD HP. We received feedback that the GDHP is a needed program that enables their young people to create social connections with other young people who are going through similar experiences. Some stand out comments that caregivers include:

**“It gives gender diverse young people something to do that is different during the holidays, sharing with like minded people. At the same time feeling acknowledged by society in the fact that it exists.” – Caregiver of GDHP Participant, 2015**

**“I think all the leaders and helpers at this holiday program did a great job and should get more opportunities to extend this program.” – Caregiver of GDHP Participant, 2015**



### Caregivers spoke about:

- Feeling happy that the program created a safe space for their young people to come along and have fun
- Wanting opportunities to connect with other caregivers and families
- How the age appropriateness of program was positive
- Support for their child and family being highly medicalised
- Their concerns for their child's wellbeing and mental health
- Negative school experiences involving both staff and students
- Their concerns about isolation for both their child and their family
- Concern about the wait to have access to appropriate health care
- Their keenness for a forum for parents and caregivers of TGD young people to
  - Build connections with other caregivers and families
  - Gain advice
  - Info on available supports
  - Legal info
  - Medical info

**the drum** Youth Service would like to acknowledge the strong support received by Transcend, a support group for parents and caregivers of young people with TGD experience. They invaluablely assisted promotion of the GDHP to their members.







## What GDHP participants would like their teachers/caregivers/workers to know

"That it's not always easy and no one knows what's truly going on inside my head but me."

"Accept me"

"It is great"

"It's important for us to interact with each other (GD young people)"

"That about 4% of the population is trans or gender diverse"

"It rocks"

"Not everyone is the same."

"Not sure"

"It's not wrong, I am not alone."

"I know my identity better than anyone - listen and try to understand."

"We are human, not a subject or minority group"

"It's really hard to be me at times, and I do need support and understanding people to listen to me."

## Where to from here

The GDHP pilot program confirms that TGD specific programs are important. During promotion we were contacted by caregivers interstate interested in taking part in the program, highlighting the need



across Australia for pro-social programs for young people with TGD experience. The next steps for our youth services include:

- Securing funding for ongoing GDHPs
- Further consultation and collaboration with TGD community and groups
- Further develop opportunities for peer leadership
- Plan a camp!

Finally, the GDHP has highlighted the importance of supporting, not only the young person, but also their family as a whole. Further consultation and collaboration with peer-support groups for the families and caregivers of TGD young people will be integral to this process. A beginning place could include a forum for family and caregivers of young people with trans and gender diverse experience.

The following report was presented at the Melbourne Youth Services Forum, hosted by the City of Melbourne (CoM), in order to demonstrate the need for activities for young people with TGD experience and their families and caregivers, and share the model of engagement with other youth services within the CoM area. The presentation included an evaluation of the GDHP, learnings and recommendations. Included within these recommendations was the support for further development of partnerships with youth-led organisations in the creation of increased peer leader opportunities.



## References

Smith, E., Jones, T., Ward, R., Dixon, D., Mitchell, A., & Hillier, L. (2014). From Blues to Rainbows: Mental health and wellbeing of gender diverse and transgender young people in Australia. Melbourne: The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health, And Society.

## Appendix i



## Feedback Sheet – parents and caregivers

Your feedback helps us create the next fun activities and also helps us advocate for more services!

What activity did your young person take part in? .....

1. My postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How did you hear about the program? \_\_\_\_\_

2. The Gender Diverse Holiday Program is beneficial for my child (circle the number which applies).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not at all Somewhat Oh Yes!

3. What was good about this program?

4. Any ideas on what could make stuff better next time?

5. I feel my child and my family are well supported in terms of my child's gender identity.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not at all Somewhat Oh Yes!

5a. What other support could be helpful?

6. Do you think it would be useful to have a forum for parents, caregivers and family of trans and gender diverse young people to come together? Y/ N

6a. What issues do you think should be covered at this forum?

7. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

# THANKYOU!



## Appendix ii



### Feedback!

Your feedback helps us create the next fun activities and also helps us advocate for more services!

Activity day: .....

My postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How did you hear about this program? \_\_\_\_\_

2. This Gender Diverse Holiday program activity was fun! (circle the number which applies).

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10  
Not at all      Somewhat      Oh Yes!

3. Please tell us two things that you liked about today!

4. Any ideas on what could make stuff better next time?

6. To what extent did this group meet your expectations?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10  
Not at all      Somewhat      Oh Yes!

What could have made it better? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How would you rate the quality of the facilitators?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10  
Not that great      Pretty good      The best!

8. If you could tell your teacher/worker/parent one or more thing about being trans or gender diverse what would it be?

8. Any other stuff that you would like to tell us?

## THANKYOU!

## Appendix iii

The Drum Youth Peer Leader – consultation at Gender Diverse Holiday Program 2015
Are you enjoying the gender diverse holiday program? What would you scale it from 1-10?
Yes-8/10 Yes-10/10 Yes-10/10 Yes-10/10 Yes-10/10 Yes-8/10 Yes-9/10
How do you think we can make programs more welcoming for gender diverse young people?
Getting to know each other using the circle (sitting in a circle and go around that way everyone is included) For gender diverse events to including CIS friends so any gender diverse young people that are nervous feel better Asking names and pronouns and for it to be okay to ask more than once No judgment zone Smaller age gaps Better advertising- inclusive wording and less focus on sexual orientation "If it's not an event were we are advocating don't put so much focus on the fact were not CIS"
Do you think it would be a good idea to have another gender diverse holiday program? Why?
Yes- Great place to meet new people Yes- Makes me feel included Yes- Fun and you get to make friends that understand who you are Yes- Fun and help people interact with others in a chill way Yes- Lots of fun and means we get to go out and be active in the holidays Yes- Helpful to make friends and it's great to have something to do in the holidays
What difficulties do you think young people your age face? How old are you?
Fitting in and finding your place Expressing themselves especially masculinity and femininity Finding your place Telling their families about their gender identity Bullying Being able to go out without worrying about safety as a gender diverse person Stereotypes Judgmental people Not being accepted Not feeling safe in public spaces
What's most important to you? (family, friends, school, extracurricular activities, hobbies, etc.)
Fairness Friends Family Music Online friends Myself, my wellbeing and my identity

If you were to organize activities or workshops not only for you but for other people your age what would they be?
Art activities- possibility of artists coming in and giving lessons over a period of time More excursions Jam session Arts- flag making (diversity) Acting- LGBTQI related Music production
Do you think you parents/ caregivers need support? What do you think that would look like?
They would need support in the form of support group and discussions with other people that are going through the same thing To have regular meeting with other parents of gender diverse kids Getting to learn more about trans issues Getting to hear stories from both gender diverse kids and their parents
Is it better to have a holiday program and program specific for gender diverse young people?
Yes-To be around people like yourself Yes- Being around people that going through the same sort of thing Yes-So people aren't afraid to attend because they feel safe Yes- Their isn't enough programs like this for gender diverse kids and it really helps with confidence Yes-We can relate to each other and feel comfortable Yes- Sometimes we don't have any other place to go
What challenges did you face when attending today if any?
None None Traffic Distance Anxiety Nervous about meeting new people Long Journey
Would you recommend the gender diverse holiday program to friends?
Yes Yes Yes Yes No- because my friends are CIS gendered and unaware Yes



## Appendix v

# Gender Diverse School Holiday Program

Facilitator guide – ACTIVITY DAY ONE

Time Needed: 30 minutes

---

## 1. ACTIVITY – Ice Breaker

**Ideal Size:** 15 people

**Use for:** Connecting participants, getting to know each other, avoiding stereotypes and assumptions, empowering YP to identify themselves, basic education around the use of pronouns and inclusivity

**Time Needed:** 30 minutes

**Materials Needed:**

- Bean bags
- Whiteboard and markers or butcher paper
- Textas
- Name and pronouns tag

**Instructions:**

1. Invite group to sit at same level (all ground or all chair)
2. Have activity instructions on whiteboard or butcher paper
3. Acknowledgement of country
4. Introduce ourselves – 5 minutes
5. Introduce Name and Pronoun activity by saying asking group: “Does everyone know what pronouns means?” Ask if anyone would like to explain, if they respond positively to question.
6. Highlight two important points: 1. Allowing people to identify themselves and not making assumptions, and 2. Inclusive group
7. Handout name and pronoun tags and
  - a. ask the group to identify their name and pronoun and apply sticker if they wish
  - b. plus their second favourite fruit

**Debrief:**

If participants appear to be unfamiliar with the name and pronoun activity – debrief by asking them what they thought was good

**Variation:**

For smaller groups, you can add: 4c ‘boo-yay-appreciation

---

## 2. ACTIVITY – Safe Space

**Ideal Size:** 15

**Use for:** Creating a safe space, creating group agreement regarding expectation of room

**Time Needed:** 15 minutes

**Materials Needed:**

- Marker
- Whiteboard or butcher paper

**Instructions:**

1. The facilitator will ask everyone to form a circle and take a seat.
2. The facilitator will start by making a statement that this is a safe space, and that everyone here is safe to explore who they are and express themselves
3. The facilitator will ask participants: 'What makes a safe space?' after group responses, then ask 'What are some things/guidelines that we can agree on to make this space a safe space for all of us?'
4. The facilitator will write down all the ideas that are brainstormed on a butcher/whiteboard
5. Ask the group if they agree on all the points. Ask if they have anything else to add.
6. If not noted already add and create consensus around the following points:
  - a. Listening to everyone – not speak over others, being respectful
  - b. Respect each other's opinion – it's okay to disagree
  - c. Respect each other's identities – i.e. name and pronouns
  - d. Have fun!

**Debrief:**

Remember to get a verbal yes from everyone in agreement to guidelines for room

**Variation:**

Older age groups may have more familiarity with room guidelines, younger cohort may need more time to gain understanding and consensus.

---

## 3. ACTIVITY – Awesome things about being trans/gender diverse

**Ideal Size:** 15 people

**Use for:** positive thinking, build connection and gender exploration

**Time Needed:** 45mins

**Materials Needed:**

- Chill out space
- Question prompt

**Instructions:**

1. Together go to the chill out space
2. Introduce by telling participants that we are going to talk about awesome things about being trans/gender diverse
3. Acknowledge that other people are often writing our stories for us, often with lots of stereotypes. And assumptions that we don't necessary identify with or experience. Ask: **"Does anyone have any example of what these things could be?"** Allowing participants to explore this as much as they want to a point and the facilitator will sum up the discussion before things become too negative.
4. **"Now that we have had a look at lots of different stereotypes and assumption with being trans or gender diverse, let's tell our actual stories. So what are the awesome things about being trans or gender diverse?"**
5. Facilitator are to be aware of any negative experiences and assist participant to reframe the situation **"what could have been better and what awesome part of you that has been dishonoured?"**

**Debrief:**

Let's write up on the board/butcher paper all the awesome things about being trans or gender diverse

---