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May 17 mai l'homophobie

May 17 mai Journée mondiale contre

**The International Day against Homophobia, held on May 17 every year**, is an event offering an opportunity for people to get together and reach out to one another. It's an opportunity to discuss sexuality and the importance of showing respect to people of all sexual orientations.

What started as a national event founded in Quebec has grown to an international day that seeks not only to shed light on the devastating effects of homophobia, but also to encourage people to learn more about sexual diversity.

#### What is homophobia?

**Homophobia** is a term used to describe negative attitudes that can lead to the rejection of or discrimination against LGBT people; that is lesbians, gay males, bisexuals, transsexuals and transgender people, or anyone whose appearance or behavior does not conform to stereotypes of masculinity or femininity. Assumptions may be made about someone's sexuality based on their physical appearance or how they dress, meaning that even heterosexuals may be victims of homophobia.

**Homophobic discrimination** usually takes one of the following four forms: jokes, teasing, harassment or physical aggression. If homophobia is to be eradicated, none of the above forms of homophobic discrimination should be tolerated.

### FYI - Some other facts about Homophobia and its devastating effects:

#### Studies reveal these worrying statistics:

- In comparison to heterosexuals, homosexuals are 2.5 times more likely and bisexuals 4 times more likely to be victims of violent crime.
- In 2010, 16% of hate crimes reported in Canada were motivated by sexual orientation. In 2009, this rate was 13 %.
- In the workplace, one quarter of people who are LGBT conceal their sexual orientation from all or most of their colleagues. Less than one quarter are open about their orientation. In 40% of cases, people conceal their orientation when there are indications it will not be accepted, and in 33% of cases, they do so because a colleague is homophobic.
- In secondary schools, 38.6% of students are victims of homophobia, through insults, teasing, exclusion, etc. Absenteeism among these students is twice that of other students. Children who are victims of homophobia have a weaker sense of belonging, and their academic goals are less well defined.

#### Some Definitions:

**Homophobia**: any negative belief, feeling or action directed against non-heterosexual persons or stimuli including gay, lesbian bisexual or transgendered individuals.

**Homosexuality**: to have feelings of affection and attraction, emotionally and physically to people of the same gender. Related terms: gay and lesbian.

**Transgender**: Transgendered is an umbrella term, relating to how some individuals express their gender identity. For some it might mean changing their gender, perhaps surgically; for others, to dress in the clothing of the "opposite" gender; for some, to be free to express themselves as neither

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## **RESPECT DIFFERENCES - RESPECTER LES DIFFÉRENCES**