

Rally opposing *Safe Schools Coalition*

Speech by **Jenny Stokes**, Research Director, Salt Shakers.

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Let me begin by saying ‘We’re all opposed to bullying of ANY kind – for ANY reason.’

We all want others to treat us kindly and with respect.

We want our children taught to treat others nicely – just as they want to be treated.

As Vickie said, many have called this the ‘Golden Rule’ – it comes from Jesus himself, who said, “*Do to others as you would have them do to you.*”

That’s what a PROPER anti-bullying program should do.

Many people don’t know that the federal government already has an excellent program.

The **National Safe Schools Framework** – written in 2003 and revised in 2010.

<http://www.safeschoolshub.edu.au/documents/nationalsafeschoolsframework.pdf>

- endorsed by ALL State and Federal Education Ministers.
- focuses on BULLYING for ANY reason – and doesn’t mention ANY of the words gay, homophobia or gender identity!

In contrast, these are the words that are the **FOCUS** of the *Safe Schools Coalition Australia* material.

There is a **Safe Schools Hub** with a HOST of resources to help schools properly deal with bullying.

<http://safeschoolshub.edu.au/>

There’s also a government website, ‘**Bullying- No Way!**’ with resources for parents, students and teachers.

<http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

In fact, this **FRIDAY – 18 March**, they’re holding a **National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence**. That’s what we should be talking about!

But we’re here to talk about the huge concerns we have about the ‘*Safe Schools Coalition Australia*’ and the materials they produce – especially the Year 7 ‘*All Of Us*’ curriculum, which I’ll look at in more detail shortly...

First, some background...

The *Safe Schools Coalition* was established in 2010 in Victoria – the founder is **Roz Ward**, who was then the co-ordinator of the *Rainbow Network*, an umbrella group of LGBTIQ organisations.

The *Rainbow Network* is a project of *Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria*.

In turn, *Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria*, “sits within the *Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society* ([ARCSHS](#)), *La Trobe University*.”

As we’ll see, the ideological perspectives and beliefs of the founders – and writers - of the *Safe Schools Coalition* are evident in the content that’s presented to students.

The *Safe Schools Coalition* . . .

- Is promoted as an ‘anti-bullying’ program.
- BUT the truth is that it “promotes inclusion and diversity”
- We would say that it promotes the normalisation of diverse sexuality and gender identity and ‘being who you want to be’.
- Ironically, the *SSCA* leads to reverse bullying. . .
 - o Anyone who doesn’t participate in the *SSC*-promoted ‘*IDAHOT Day*’ or the ‘Wear it Purple’ Day is criticised.
 - o In the Year 7 ‘*All Of Us*’ curriculum, although they talk about accepting all views, those who don’t agree with the views presented on sexual and gender identity are either silenced - or criticised if they speak against the content.

The Ideology behind the ‘Safe Schools Coalition’

Let me give you one example...

The *Safe Schools Coalition* criticises ‘**heteronormativity**’ ...

What’s that, I hear you say...

Heteronormativity – a word you might expect to find in a University ‘Gender Studies’ course. It’s used by activists who are promoting alternative views of sexuality and gender.

It challenges the fact that ‘heterosexuality’ is the normal expression of sexual interaction between a man and a woman – the foundation of society for millennia.

‘Heteronormativity’ is NOT a word you’d expect 12 year olds to understand.

But it’s in the new ‘*All Of Us*’ Year 7 curriculum designed by the ‘*Safe Schools Coalition Australia*’.

In Lesson 6 of the Year 7 *All Of Us* curriculum there is actually a **GROUP DISCUSSION for the 12 year olds . . . What is 'Heteronormativity'?**

Some suggestions include: asking new parents whether their baby is a boy or a girl; always asking boys if they have a girlfriend rather than a girlfriend or a boyfriend;

Why the focus on ‘heteronormativity’?

Because it undermines and questions our normal way of living and relating to each other.

It’s the ideological foundation of one of the authors of the course, **Roz Ward**, who has done a Masters degree in Gender Studies.

Roz Ward gave a *Big Fat Ideas* presentation, where she explained what schools are doing when they sign up to *Safe Schools Coalition*...

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/homework-is-so-gay-how-do-we-challenge-homophobia-in-schools>

“When they [schools] join they say, ‘We’re making a commitment to supporting sexual diversity and gender diversity in our school. We’re making a commitment to challenging homophobia, to challenging transphobia, and to **thinking beyond ‘heterosexuality is normal’**’.

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/homework-is-so-gay-how-do-we-challenge-homophobia-in-schools>

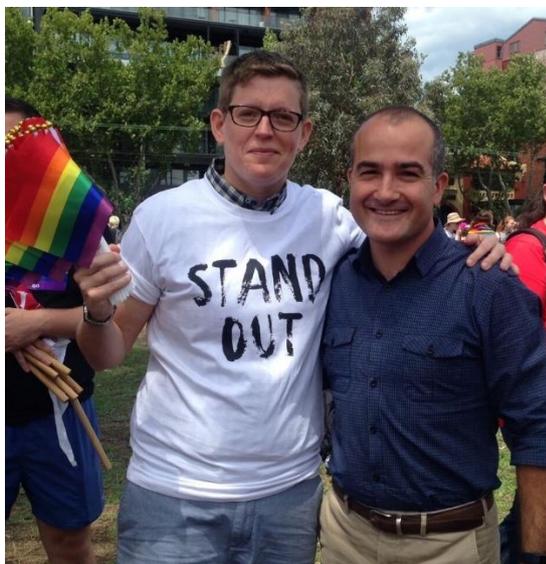
Roz Ward told the **Marxism conference 2015** in Melbourne about her personal membership of *Socialist Alternative* and the reasons she founded the SSC:

*“Marxism offers both the hope and the strategy needed to create a world where human sexuality, gender and how we relate to our bodies can blossom in extraordinarily new and amazing ways that we can only try to imagine today, **because Marxism has a theory of social change.**”*

Last week, at a rally supporting the SSCA, she told supporters,

“I want people to know: I’m here, I’m queer and I’m not going anywhere.”

James Merlino and Roz Ward...



We’re here today in Belgrave, because the electorate office of **James Merlino**, the Victorian Education Minister, is just down the street.

Here’s a photo of James Merlino arm in arm with Roz Ward, the founder of the *Safe Schools Coalition*. It was taken at the recent *Midsumma Pride March*, here in Melbourne.

When Tony Abbott spoke to the *Heritage Foundation* in the USA recently, he was criticised by the left for speaking to a ‘far-right’ group.

But here James Merlino is seen proudly posing for a photography with a person who is a self-professed member of *Socialist Alternative* and an avowed Marxist – where is the outcry?

See report at <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/proud-to-stand-out>

Of the other authors of the ‘*All Of Us*’ curriculum, **Margot Fink** is a transgender person from youth activist group *Minus18* – and teacher **Christopher Bush** is an out homosexual.

The SSC MATERIALS

Safe Schools Coalition Australia has produced a range of booklets and resources for schools:

Website: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/>

Resources: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/resources>

These include:

- **Safe Schools Do Better** - introductory guide to supporting gender diversity, intersex and sexual diversity in schools.
- **Guide to hosting inclusive school formals**
- **Stand Out** – how to start a queer-straight alliance group
- **Posters** – Discrimination-free zone, gender is not uniform (with a boy in a girl’s dress),
- **OMG I’m Queer**
- **OMG My Friend’s Queer**

Safe Schools also get involved when a child wants to ‘transition’ from one gender to another – last year a child in PREP – five years old - changed from being a ‘GIRL’ to a ‘BOY’!

The RESEARCH

The *Safe Schools Coalition* Resources list includes **RESEARCH** – that’s quoted in other materials and in the Year 7 *All Of Us* curriculum...

- *From Blues to Rainbows*
- *Writing Themselves In*

The *All Of Us* Year 7 Curriculum states:

“We know that 75% of same sex attracted young people experience some form of homophobic abuse or bullying”

This comes from the ‘*Writing themselves in*’ study...

The research is conducted by the *Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society* (I mentioned that before...)

There are huge problems with the research...

- Volunteer subjects (not randomly selected)
- Recruited at homosexual events and through homosexual media
- No parental permission obtained
- Self-description of personal feelings
- The research is ideologically driven
- lead researcher of *Writing Themselves In*, **Lynne Hillier**, was named as one of the ‘25 Most Influential Gay and Lesbian Australians in 2010’. But no conflict of interest is ever declared.

The Year 7 ‘All Of Us’ curriculum

During the speech, I displayed the HANDOUTS on ‘Sexual Identity’, ‘Gender Identity’, the Pledge (L 6), the ‘Missions’ (L 7) and the Handout from Lesson 8 on ‘Strategies to make a safer school’.

They are all in the GUIDE to the ‘All Of Us’ curriculum’ –

Online at

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/app/theme/default/design/assets/all-of-us/documents/unit-guide.pdf>

Videos are presented to 12 year old students – they are of people around 17 – 19 – all over the ‘age of consent’.

The course is about being inclusive and explaining LGBTIQ theory - not about bullying.

Despite being told that ‘all views are respected’ in the classroom (Lesson 1) there is NO space for expressing an alternative view.

Links to range of organisations

Students are told that *Minus18* is the best resource for students.

Handout to students lists Organisations such as *Minus18 – Family Planning, Ygender, AIDS Councils*, etc. (Guide – page 14)

Lessons on homosexuality, bisexuality, transgender and intersex

In Lesson 2, on ‘same-sex attraction’, students are asked to imagine they are 16 and attracted to someone of the same sex.

Handouts on Sexual Identity and Gender Identity

Sexual Identity Handout (P 24)

The List of OPTIONS are:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Straight, Queer and Pansexual – in that order!

Students are encouraged to ‘Be a Good Ally’ in every lesson.

In this lesson, students are told that, to be a good ally...

- Don’t make assumptions that people are straight.
- Instead, use phrases like “do you have a boyfriend or girlfriend?”.

What is a Year 7 student supposed to think about this?

Most girls at that age are thinking that their ‘girlfriend’ is their best friend.

The next lesson is on BISEXUALITY

After watching a video of Vivian explaining that she is bisexual, students are asked a series of questions...

Including is “**What does being bisexual mean?**”

Perhaps the writers realised even the teacher would need help with this one – they suggest looking at the Glossary provided in the Guide to get help!

So now the 12 year olds are thinking about Boyfriends AND Girlfriends and getting VERY confused!

Then we move on to GENDER IDENTITY in Lesson 4.

Students are told that **Gender** is ‘How you feel’ – it’s in the heading on the Handout.

- Taught that gender is different to sex
- That one’s ‘gender’ might not ‘match’ one’s biological sex.
- That everyone might have different ‘pronouns’

In the **Gender Identity Handout**, Gender is shown as being FLUID on a spectrum from feminine to masculine - with ‘Gender Neutral’ in the middle.

(Handout on P 34)

- They’re told that Gender is non-binary – ie, not just TWO options.

On the ‘feminine end’ several options are given

- The first is Trans Girl, then woman, then Sister Girl then female.

The masculine end – the first option is ‘Trans Guy’

In the ‘Gender Neutral’ category are “Androgynous, Genderqueer, Non-Binary, Agender, All Genders”.

What does this do to the MIND of a 12 year old?

As **Andrew Bolt** said, this is **bullying children into becoming ‘gender fluid’!**

Students are only given ONE SIDE of the story...

Recently the **American College of Paediatricians** issued a **POSITION STATEMENT:**

7. Rates of suicide are twenty times greater among adults who use cross-sex hormones and undergo sex reassignment surgery, even in Sweden which is among the most LGBTQ – affirming countries.

What compassionate and reasonable person would condemn young children to this fate knowing that after puberty as many as 88% of girls and 98% of boys will eventually accept reality and achieve a state of mental and physical health?

ALLY AND ACTIVIST

The *All Of Us* curriculum goes beyond just teaching about LGBTI issues – **the final three lessons encourage students to become an ALLY and an ACTIVIST!**

Lesson 6 asks students to SIGN a PLEDGE to be an ‘ALLY’ (See P 44).

In Lesson 7, students are asked to go further...

- Talk about pronouns, gender & uniform . . .
- **ASKED to complete TWO MISSIONS to put this into practice during the following week.**
- **See Page 48.**

In Lesson 8, students are encouraged to be ACTIVISTS...

- given a two page handout and brainstorm ideas of how to promote, and lobby for, this in their school:
 - Gender neutral toilets
 - Get schools to join SSC
 - Put up LGBTI posters
 - Paint a rainbow crossing

See Page 52-53.

Then they’re asked to give ‘Feedback’ by going on to the *Safe Schools Coalition* website.

This serves as a reminder of all the gender and sexual diversity ideas they’ve been taught.

CONCLUSION

Schools should have a genuine anti-bullying program that addresses all forms of bullying for any reason.

Programs such as **Choose Respect** – and **RULER** – are appropriate programs.

– not this ideologically driven *Safe Schools Coalition* which ONLY focuses on LGBTI issues and destroys the innocence of our children.

The Lesson on 'Heteronormativity'...

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1.

Group Discussion: What is 'Heteronormativity'?

Despite this, young people still grow up in a world that is widely heteronormative. Heteronormativity describes a belief-system that reinforces that same sex attracted, intersex, and gender diverse people are somehow less 'normal' than everyone else. For example, a heteronormative view might be that a person who is assigned the male sex at birth, will always grow up to identify as a male and will always go on to have romantic and sexual relationships with females. While this is a common experience for many people it is certainly not the case for all LGBTI people. Because of heteronormativity LGBTI people often face exclusions as well as direct or indirect discrimination due to their bodies, gender and/or relationships.

Explain the above paragraph in your own words to students before inviting them to think of everyday examples where this world-view is reinforced. **Some suggestions include: asking new parents whether their baby is a boy or a girl; always asking boys if they have a girlfriend rather than a girlfriend or a boyfriend; telling a girl not to express herself in masculine ways because it is not 'lady-like'.**