



A Reflection on “No Space For Hate,” List of Local 2SLGBTQIA+ Resources

Sept. 21, 2023

This Municipal Advisory is to acknowledge widespread events across the country that took place yesterday impacting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. These are difficult topics for many of us to navigate as we tend to have strong personal biases and opinions that may conflict with others’ views.

On September 20, in Halifax and many other communities across the country, protesters identifying as a group called 1 Million March 4 Children gathered to oppose “gender ideology in schools.” The purpose of the march is stated as: “Standing united as one against the perversion that is targeting our children in schools but also online.” The word “perversion” carries a negative connotation that is all too familiar in the historical treatment, marginalization, and oppression of identities who are not heterosexual and cisgender (identifying as the gender they were assigned at birth).



In response to the 1 Million March, numerous protests across the country have been met with peaceful counter-protests by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and allied groups. One such counter-protest in Halifax, called Education Saves Lives, was organized by Benedicte Wiggett, an educator of 30 years who advocates for respectful engagement by parents in their children’s education. The messages of the protestors begin with protecting children from learning “unnecessary” gender ideologies; however, they are often accompanied with bigotry and hateful speech. It is not difficult to find recent instances of violent acts and hate crimes being committed against members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community locally. Just this past April, a Pride flag was burned at a Tantallon high school. Wiggett states the misinformation that is central to the messages of the protestors: “Teachers are being accused of being groomers and sexual predators by teaching about sexual education and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.” These are harmful accusations and impact those being accused greatly, as well as the students and community members who greatly value and need inclusive gender and sexuality education to feel a sense of safety and

belonging. Another response to the 1 Million March includes the nationally coordinated social media effort to promote “Hate Has No Space Here”. The above graphic is being shared widely to promote diversity and inclusion across Canada.

This complicated issue causes tension and strong emotions among many people who are passionate about one side of the argument or the other. However, the negative connotation and anti-LGBTQ+ messages of the 1 Million March communicate a lack of inclusion for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. There are folks in our local community who are greatly impacted as this is one of many historical and current situations where members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community fear risks to their right to not be discriminated against, as well as risks to their personal safety and sense of belonging.

The Municipality of the County of Kings *Strategy for Belonging* acknowledges the marginalized experiences of those who belong to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, beginning with “2S,” which represents the Indigenous identity “Two-Spirit” as an act of reconciliation. This is a recognition of the additional oppression and marginalization that Indigenous members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community face as a result of their race, as well as gender/sexual identity.

Ways to engage:

- 1. Prioritize self-care**

Decide whether to engage in conversations about the issue or not. If these messages are harmful to you or your family members, rely on your support network to decide how to process and respond.

- 2. Check in on friends and loved ones who belong to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community**

Acknowledge the impact this situation may have, listen non-judgmentally, and consider referring them to resources (see below) where appropriate.

- 3. Speak messages of support for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community**

For example, share No Space for Hate image on social media or change your profile picture to the image.

- 4. Speak up against hate speech**

When you hear something said or see something posted online that is discriminatory or hate speech, speak up about it firmly. Try these statements:

“That word is offensive and harmful.”

“What you're saying is hate speech and violates human rights laws.”

“What you're saying is unkind, inappropriate and just plain wrong. Please don't talk like that.”

- 5. Advocate for inclusive education**

- 6. Seek education and resources to further understanding of the issues**

Local Resources:

Annapolis Valley Pride	https://www.avalleypride.ca/	Instagram: avalleypride
The Red Door	https://thereddoor.ca/	Call: 1-902-679-1411
The Youth Project	https://youthproject.ns.ca/	Call: 1-902-429-5429
Acadia Pride	Facebook: Acadia Pride	Instagram: acadiapride
Sexual Health NS	https://shns.ca/resources/	

Helplines:

LGBT Youthline	https://www.youthline.ca	Call: 1-800-268-9688	Text: 647-694-4275
Trans Lifeline	https://www.translifeline.org	Call: 1-877-330-6366	

References:

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