

Emerging Equity Issues in a COVID-19 World

ON March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. The rapid response of governments at the municipal, provincial and national levels has transformed our lives in a matter of weeks. Amidst the daily increase of reported cases and concern for our health care system's capacity to address this crisis, existing social inequities become more apparent.

This global health crisis has also resulted in the rise of the discrepancy between those with privilege and those who are marginalized by society. These oppression points include but are not limited to: racism, homophobia, classism and gender inequality and more.

Equity and Women's Services (EWS) will be providing overviews of some of the ways in which different, particular groups are impacted by COVID-19. Below are links to more information with a quote from each website that speaks to how members and parents can celebrate the Day of Pink, a day centered on transphobic and homophobic bullying, online by considering the realities of cyber-bullying as well as ways in which to continue to keep 2SLGBTQ+ youth safe.

Resource #1: egale.ca

Egale Canada continues to provide numerous and amazing resources on the 2SLGBTQ+ community that are user friendly. On April 6, in partnership with INNOVATIVE research group, Egale released a report on the ways COVID-19 is directly affecting the 2SLGBTQ+ people. This includes the increased likelihood for mental health issues that are further exacerbated by the lack of mental health professionals who understand specific needs of the queer community. The [full report](#) as well as tips and statistics to help educate and inform educators is accessible online.

Resource #2: prevnet.ca

There is the constant threat of violence and discrimination for 2SLGBTQ+ youth. Sadly, this is a part of everyday life that 2SLGBTQ+ people live with in addition to the fear that their network, including family members, will not support them should they choose to come out.

[Prevnet](#) offers information for adults to recognize the signs of bullying and harassment of 2SLGBTQ+ youth and resources to proactively address bullying.

Resource #3: the519.org

The 519 continues to be a community-based centre that supports the most vulnerable communities in our society. While its doors are closed due to COVID-19, there are resources and tools available virtually. Feel free to access [the site](#) for supports available for educators and students to create a more inclusive society for all, especially during this time of crisis.

Resource #4: youthline.ca

LGBT Youthline has adapted in the context of COVID-19, which has evolved rapidly. This includes remaining open as there are many 2SLGBTQ+ youth in Ontario facing further isolation in homes with families that are not supportive of their identity, gender or sexuality. Although many in-person programs are cancelled, the phone line continues to provide an outlet for those in need.