Queer Place, Safe Space
Establishing LGBTQIA+ Programming for Teens

Presented by
Kristin Kern, Teen Services Librarian
Elizabeth Lippoldt, Teen Services Librarian
St. Charles City-County Library
Background

★ How’d we start? They asked!
★ Strong community needs
★ Success: high turn-out and expansion of the group to other branches
How to Get Started

★ Talk to teens: what do they want?
★ Talk to supervisors: what can we do to make this work?
★ Organization
★ Getting the word out!
Handling Negative Community Reaction

★ Library Supervisors/Staff
★ Patrons
★ Parents
★ Drag Queen Storytime
  ○ Thursday, 1:15 pm, Windsor IV
★ Advocate, advocate, advocate!
Activities

....So what do you do? Everything!

★ Life event discussion / venting
★ LGBTQIA+ buttons
★ Shrinkydinks
★ Perler beads
★ Pop culture discussion
★ Queer historical research & Documentaries
★ Queer storytime
★ Clothing drive for transitioning teens

★ Queer Prom
★ St. Charles Pride
★ Drag Queen visit
★ Local LGBTQIA+ community-led discussion
★ Queer battledecks & pictionary
★ Improv
★ Crafts
★ Informative posters for the teen area
★ Snacks!
Working with the Community
“I really appreciate LGBT Teens & Allies because it's a safe place to meet and hang out with other kids of the community. I'm glad the library offers this because it shows that the LGBT community is valid and welcomed at the library, in comparison to many other public places who have made it clear that they don't support us. My favorite things were learning about historical figures who were LGBT but had their history erased, along with talking about the ace spectrum.”

- Legend

“This group is a marker not only of advancement in acceptance in public spaces like the library, but a clear display of the world slowly progressing an open mind and a genuine care as to what the people want and need from the systems in place around them. The desires that are voiced by the teens are rarely not followed through, or at least not acknowledged. Everyone and their ideas have somewhere to be heard. The LGBT Teens & Allies group is one of those places; another somewhere that someone might stumble upon and find that they fit for once. I am beyond thankful for the wonders something like this does for somebody who hasn’t found their somewhere yet.”

- Damien
Resources

Book Resources:

★ ALA Rainbow Booklist
★ ALA Stonewall Book Awards
★ Queer Books for Teens Database
★ Representing the Rainbow In Young Adult Literature by Jenkins & Cart

Information:

★ LGBT Terms & Definitions
★ Setting up an LGBT youth group
★ GSA Resources
★ Kanopy
Can I Do This?

YES,
YOU CAN!
Questions?

Kristin Kern
Teen Services Librarian
Corporate Parkway Branch
kkern@stchlibrary.org

Elizabeth Lippoldt
Teen Services Librarian
Kathryn Linnemann Branch
elippoldt@stchlibrary.org