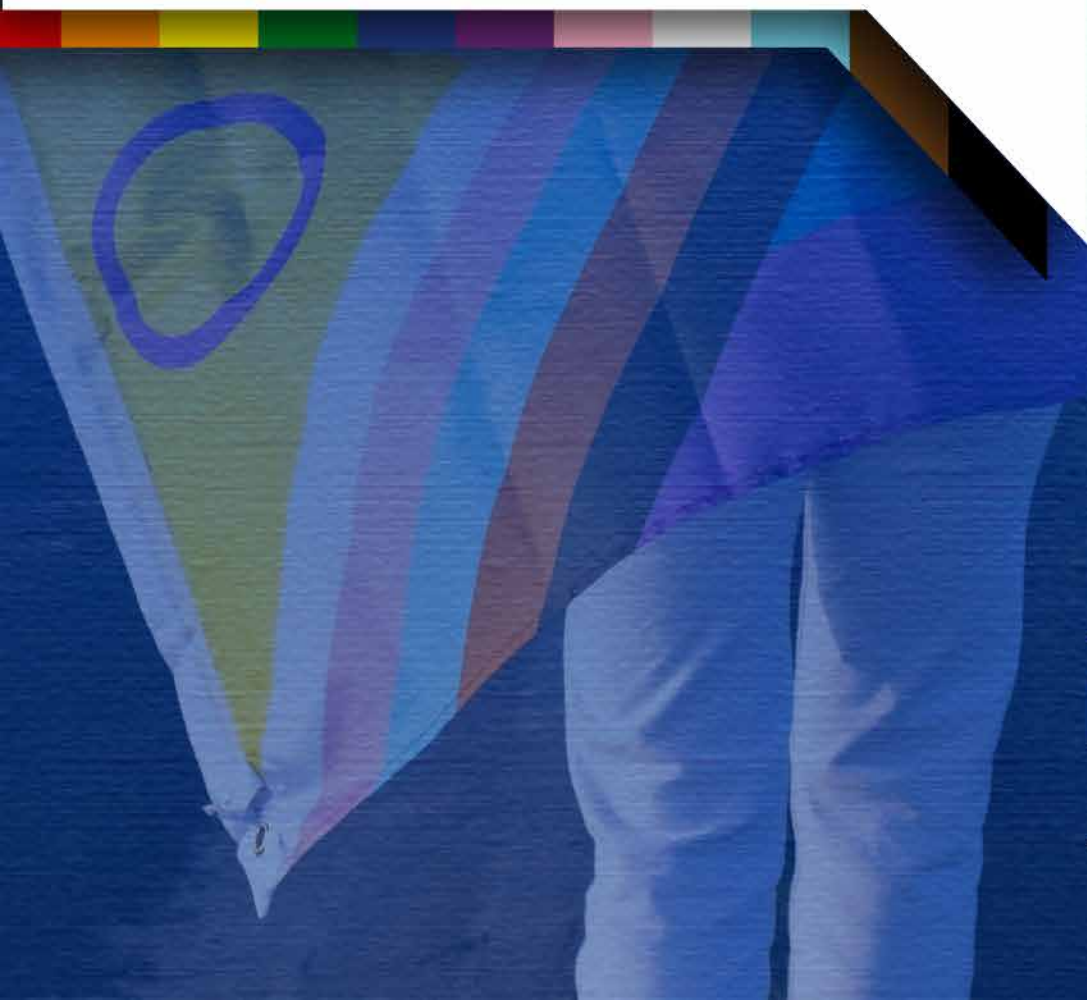


Inclusive Narratives:

A Messaging Guide for
2SLGBTQI Advocacy



Egale

egale.ca | @egalecanada

Introduction

In Canada, one of our core shared values is that everyone – no matter what part of the country they live in – should feel safe to be their authentic self. However, we are continuing to see a rise in hate that is threatening the safety, freedoms, and rights of 2SLGBTQI people across the country.

We have created this guide to provide the tools needed by advocates and organizations to develop effective messaging to combat the ongoing rise in anti-2SLGBTQI hate.

The content in this guide was informed by [*We Will Win: Guide to Campaign Messaging in Support of Trans Youth*](#), a resource developed through a collaboration between Egale Canada, Momentum Canada, LeBlanc & Co., and the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity. While We Will Win remains applicable for messaging in support of trans youth, this guide has been developed for broader use by all 2SLGBTQI advocates and organizations.



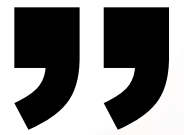
Steps for Crafting Persuasive Messaging

Developed in the United States to neutralize the use of dog-whistle racism, [Race Class Narrative](#) theory is an empirically-tested narrative on race and class that can be adapted by communicators across progressive issues.

The following steps outline the key elements of Race Class Narrative that you can use to build out persuasive 2SLGBTQI inclusion messaging:

1. Lead with shared values.

It can be tempting to start off by describing the problem we are trying to solve, but leading with a shared value brings people together more effectively. Times are tough for many of us right now, and adding more problems to people's plates before establishing common values and goals can turn them away. Opening with a shared value shows people why they should care about your cause. A shared value should be something most people can agree with.



Example:

In Canada, we believe that everyone – no matter their age, race, economic status, or gender identity – should have access to the medical care that they need in order to ensure their physical and mental health.



Example:

[Insert politician name] **is making schools less inclusive for 2SLGBTQI students by implementing discriminatory policies to distract from the many other urgent issues facing [insert constituency] that they have failed to address.**

2. State the problem actively, after the shared value.

In addition to outlining the harmful situation, be sure to also name who is causing the harm (this could be a politician introducing discriminatory legislation or a far-right group that is spreading disinformation). The problem needs to have a clear origin in order for potential allies to feel like they can help solve it. Including a motive can also help clarify the origin of the problem.

3. Frame the problem in opposition to the shared value, rather than how it is harmful to certain individuals.

In order to appeal to the largest number of people possible, we need to frame the problem as a threat to our shared values. If an issue does not directly impact the person you are appealing to, they may need guidance towards understanding why they should care.

Example:

In a country like ours, where everyone deserves to feel safe to be who they are, it is unacceptable to see hate crimes targeting 2SLGBTQI communities rising every year. This is why we have been calling on all levels of government to take action.

“

”

We must openly name the race, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity issues our opponents dismissively label “identity politics.” In message testing, it has proven most effective to do this after we name a shared value first. By framing the harm we describe as an attack not only on some group but also on the shared value established at the outset, it provides us the moral high ground and increases the size of our pool of supporters.¹

¹ Shenker-Osorio, A. (2017). *Messaging This Moment: A Handbook for Progressive Communicators*. Center for Community Change. <https://communitychange.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/C3-Messaging-This-Moment-Handbook.pdf>

4. Describe what we are fighting for, not just what we are against.

Avoid falling into the trap of repeating our opponent's messaging. With increasing amounts of hateful rhetoric targeting 2SLGBTQI communities, it can be tempting to try to directly counter it, but this just gives our opponents more airtime.

Example:

By supporting education policies that foster 2SLGBTQI inclusion, we can create school environments where every young person feels accepted, respected, and free to be themselves.



Example:

Join us in calling on the federal government to launch the National Action Plan on Combatting Hate...

5. Provide a clear call to action.

We don't just want people to hear our message, we want them to join our cause. Make sure to include a clear call to action so that existing supporters are mobilized and new ones become actively engaged.



6. Refer back to the shared value.

Conclude by connecting your call to action back to the shared value.

Example:

Join us in calling on the federal government to launch the National Action Plan on Combatting Hate in order to protect 2SLGBTQI communities and ensure a Canada where everyone is safe to be their authentic self.



Examples of Effective Narratives for 2SLGBTQI Advocacy

Remember:

1. Lead with shared values.
2. State the problem actively, after the shared value.
3. Frame the problem in opposition to the shared value, rather than how it is harmful to certain individuals.
4. Describe what we are fighting for, not just what we are against.
5. Provide a clear call to action.
6. Refer back to the shared value.



In Canada, we believe that everyone – no matter their age, race, economic status, or gender identity – should have access to the medical care that they need in order to ensure their physical and mental health. However, despite what we know from decades of research about gender-affirming health care being necessary and safe, Premier Smith is introducing discriminatory policies to restrict gender-affirming care, and trampling over the right to access health care for all.

Example:

Gender-affirming care is medically necessary and it is lifesaving for those who need access to it. Together, we can ensure that the right to accessing care is upheld.

Join us in calling on Premier Smith to cancel her discriminatory policies, and to instead consult with experts and those who will be impacted in order to ensure everyone – including trans and gender diverse communities – have access to the lifesaving health care that they require.



Example:

Everyone, no matter what part of the country they live in, should feel safe to be their authentic self. But in recent months, some of our political leaders have been contributing to the spread of hateful disinformation that is threatening the safety, freedoms, and rights of 2SLGBTQI people – especially those who are Two Spirit, trans, nonbinary, and/or gender non-conforming.

By actively and intentionally combatting the spread of hateful disinformation, we can work towards building a country where everyone, including all 2SLGBTQI communities are safe. By calling on our political leaders to lead by example and speak out against anti-2SLGBTQI hate and disinformation, we can end the violence against 2SLGBTQI people in our country.



A photograph of two women sitting and talking. The woman on the left has a shaved head and is wearing a dark tank top. The woman on the right has dark curly hair and is wearing a striped shirt. They are in a room with shelves in the background. The image is overlaid with a purple gradient.

Interviews and Conversations: How to Pivot

Similar to Step 4 in [Crafting Persuasive Messaging](#), when engaging in an interview or conversation, it is important to describe what we are fighting for, not what we are against. We want to give airtime to repeating our own key messages, not what our opponents are saying.

“

Our opponents make frequent outlandish claims about our communities and their own actions. It can be tempting to engage in rebuttal...But this simply

has us repeating their words and unwittingly lending credibility to them. As much as we wish otherwise, negating a claim actually brings it top of mind. People latch onto the most tangible element of a sentence – usually the noun. In contrast, words like “don’t” and “not” are intangible. In fact, decades of research demonstrate that attempts to refute false information can actually strengthen people’s belief in the claims.²

² Shenker-Osorio, A. (2017). *Messaging This Moment: A Handbook for Progressive Communicators*. Center for Community Change. <https://communitychange.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/C3-Messaging-This-Moment-Handbook.pdf>

Steps to pivot:

1
Lead with a shared value on the topic

2
Reference back to the question
(without repeating the opponent's framing)

3
Return to key messaging



Example:

Question:

What is your response to ___ saying that it's not fair to let trans kids participate on sports teams and that they should have their own teams?

Answer:

Sport is a lifeline for so many young people, and all kids deserve to access the numerous physical and social benefits that sports offer.

But more and more, trans and gender diverse kids are being discriminated against and excluded from athletics and sports due to some politicians trying to cause division and fear.

The world's leading experts in sports medicine and human rights in sports agree that no one should be prevented from competing in a sporting competition simply because they are trans.

What we should be focusing on is working together to ensure that all young people have access to the many research-confirmed long-term health benefits of sport including stress and anxiety reduction, positive cardiovascular impacts, and improvements in self-esteem and confidence.

Conclusion

Thank you for doing your part to combat anti-2SLGBTQI hate. Together, we will build a Canada, and ultimately a world, without homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and all other forms of oppression so that every person can achieve their full potential, free from hatred and bias.

For questions and to provide feedback regarding this guide, please contact communications@egale.ca

Egale



Suite 217-120 Carlton Street,
Toronto, ON. M5A 4K2



(416) 964-7887



egale.ca

@egalecanada

