Don’t Be A Drag, Just Be A (Prom) Queen!

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Why Is It Important?

- *EVERY* COMMUNITY HAS QUEER T(W)EENS
- Serving ALL community members
- Third/Safe Space
- Positive relationships, role models, and roles in the community
- Meeting new queer teens
- Find yourself!
**Generation QUEER**

- Gen Z is the *queerest* generation according to The Innovation Group’s 2016 study.
  - Only 48% of Gen Z identifies as exclusively heterosexual
  - 56% said that they knew someone who went by gender neutral pronouns.
  - Over 1/3 of Gen Z respondents “strongly agreed” that gender did not define a person as much as it used to.
  - Only 44% said they always bought clothes designed for their own gender.
  - 70% felt strongly that public spaces should provide access to gender neutral bathrooms.
Sad Stats

According to Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s 2015 study LGB students were:

- 2x as likely to have been bullied at school or electronically compared to heterosexual peers.
- 5x more likely to use drugs than their heterosexual peers.
- 3x as likely to have seriously considered suicide and more than 4 times as likely to have attempted suicide compared to heterosexual peers.
- 2x as likely to feel sad or hopeless compared to heterosexual peers.
- 3x more likely than their heterosexual peers to be forced into sexual intercourse & more than 2x as likely to have experienced physical or sexual dating violence than heterosexual peers.
- Almost 3x as likely to skipped school because they feel unsafe compared to heterosexual peers.
Sad Stats

According to the Human Rights Campaign’s 2018 LGBTQ Youth Report:

- Only 26% say they always feel safe in their school classrooms -- and just 5% say all of their teachers and school staff are supportive of LGBTQ people.
- 67% report that they’ve heard family members make negative comments about LGBTQ people.
- Only 27% of LGBTQ youth can “definitely” be themselves in school as an LGBTQ person.
Butch Queen, First Time In Drag

1. A partner group, Mystic LGBTQ+ Youth Support Network (Queer Mystic for short) approached us with the idea to do an alternative prom aimed at queer teens.
2. We met with Queer Mystic & local teens to discuss what makes a prom & what we wanted to do differently.
3. When talking about themes & names for the prom, the idea of making the prom based around drag came up & stuck!
What Makes A Prom?

1. Safety
2. Decor
3. Food
4. Friends
5. Music & Dancing
6. Photography
Rules

1. Attendees must be 12–19 to participate, as per the rules for all of our teen programs.
2. No alcohol or drugs would be permitted on the premises.
3. Once teens left the premises, they would not be permitted to re-enter.
4. No violence of any type would be permitted.
Setting The Stage

- Non-library Venues
- Welcome Table
- Runway Ready!
- Crepe Paper Realness
- Balloon Bonanza
- Flower Power
- Showboat Signage
- Photo Finish
- Swag
Eat It Up

- Accepted donations from Food Link
- Teens bought and baked food
- We got pizza & drinks!
I Wanna Dance With Somebody

- Coordinated dances
- POP music!
- Teen volunteer DJ made playlist
- Took song requests
Covergirl

- Hired a local queer photographer
- Posed prom photos & candid shots
- Teens who wanted access to the pictures left an email & we uploaded photos to a password protected album
**Extras We Added**

1. Make-up & Wardrobe Stations
2. Runway
3. Hosts
4. Cooldown Area
5. Workshops
6. Community Partners

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**THE GAY AGENDA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MON</td>
<td>BE GAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUE</td>
<td>TACOS!</td>
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<tr>
<td>WED</td>
<td>BE GAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>THR</td>
<td>BE GAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRI</td>
<td>SUPER GAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>SUPER GAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN</td>
<td>MARCH FOR OUR RIGHTS</td>
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Beat For The Gods!

- Start of evening
- Space to get ready!
- Accessorize – jewelry and clothes
- Drag King and Queen Makeup
Stomp the Runway

- Taped a runway down the dancefloor
- Hosts & teens were given time to walk the runway
This Is The Main Event

- Drag “Nuns” – Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence
- Drag Queen – Kamden T. Rage
- Drag King – Jayden KA St. James
- Welcome & “Blessing”
- Started runway
- Solo performances
- Closed the prom
Let’s Have A Kiki

- A space to chill...
  - Quieter space to take a break
  - Beanbags
  - Coloring
  - Queer books to peruse
Work(shop) It!

- **Makeup & Persona Workshops**
  - Drag King & Queen hosted
  - Makeup
  - Persona
  - Clothes

- **Drag History Evening**
  - Library hosted
  - Videos (from YouTube & elsewhere) about
    - What is drag?
    - Historical significance
Group Challenge!

- Queer Mystic
- Council On Aging
- Arlington Community Housing Inc.
- Food Link
- ACMI
- Gays For Good
Shante You Stay

- Serving underserved population
- Create/Strengthen Community Partnerships
- Promotion!
Sashay Away

- Language
- CORIs
- Too many chaperones
- Coordinate schedules w/ school & other events
- Better organization & coordination w/ partners
- Always have a backup for tech!
Collaborative Realness

- Help promote
- Volunteer your talents
- Host pre-prom workshops
- Host drag history workshops
- **Email Katy** to find out other ways to help!
  
kkania@minlib.net
Gimme, Gimme, More!

- LGBTQIA+ teen drop-in
- Queer speakers/educational events
- Queer movie night
- Queer book club
- Queer crafts
- Queer current events discussion/civic engagement
- Queer potluck/picnic
- Queer displays (not just during Pride!)
- Queer materials on non-queer displays
- Queer material lists
Sources

- https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/sep/16/lgbt-high-school-students-cdc-study
- https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/ss/ss6509a1.htm
- https://broadly.vice.com/en_us/article/kb4dvz/teens-these-days-are-queer-af-new-study-says