

LGBTQIA+ Starter Library

Take this list to your school or community library to encourage the development of a diverse collection for LGBTQIA+ youth, advisors and allies. Curated by Megan McCafferty, New York Times bestselling author and HiTOPS volunteer.

Favorite LGB YA Fiction (high school and up)

“Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda” (2015) Becky Albertelli
Sixteen-year-old and not-so-openly gay Simon Spier prefers to save his drama for the school musical. But his secret is at risk of being thrust into the spotlight.

“Beauty Queens” (2011) Libba Bray
When a plane crash strands 13 teen beauty contestants on a mysterious island, they struggle to survive, to combat the island’s diabolical occupants, and to learn their dance numbers.

“The Miseducation of Cameron Post” (2012) Emily M. Danforth
When Cameron Post’s parents die suddenly in a car crash, her shocking first thought is relief. Relief they’ll never know that, hours earlier, she had been kissing a girl.

“Tell Me Again How A Crush Should Feel” (2014) Sara Farizan
Leila’s Persian heritage already makes her different from her classmates; if word got out that she liked girls, life would be twice as hard.

“Openly Straight” (2013) Bill Konigsberg
Rafe is a normal teenager from Boulder, Colorado. He plays soccer. He likes to write. And, oh yeah, he's gay. Award-winning novel about being out, proud, and ready for something else.

“Everything Leads to You” (2014) Nina LaCour
Ava is unlike anyone Emi has ever met. She’s enigmatic.... She’s beautiful. And she is about to expand Emi’s understanding of family, acceptance, and true romance.

“Boy Meets Boy” (2003) David Levithan
Paul attends a high school like no other: Cheerleaders ride Harleys, the homecoming queen was a guy named Daryl, and the gay-straight alliance teaches straight kids how to dance.

“Ash” (2009) Malinda Lo
Cinderella retold. Instead of chasing fairies, Ash learns hunts with Kaisa. Their friendship is as delicate as a new bloom, it reawakens Ash's capacity for love-and her desire to live.

“Aristotle & Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe” (2014) Benjamin A. Saenz
Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all with an unusual way of looking at the world. They share a special friendship that changes lives and lasts a lifetime.

Favorite LGB Middle Grade Fiction (upper elementary/middle school)

“Better Nate than Never” (2014) “Five, Six, Seven, Nate!” (2015) Tim Federle
Nate Foster has big dreams. His whole life, he’s wanted to star in a Broadway show. But how is Nate supposed to make his dreams come true when he’s stuck in Jankburg, Pennsylvania?

“See You at Harry’s” (2012) Jo Knowles
Twelve-year-old Fern’s brother, Holden, pretends that Mom and Dad and everyone else doesn’t know he’s gay, even as he fends off bullies at school.

“The Misfits” (2003) “Totally Joe” (2007) “Addie on the Inside” (2011) “Also Known as Elvis” (2015) James Howe
The middle school series that inspired National No Name-Calling Week. Classics for their smart, honest portrayal of all the ups and downs of middle school—and of growing up.

“So Hard to Say” (2006) Alex Sanchez
Frederick knows he should be flattered by Xio’s attention. After all, she’s popular, pretty, and a lot of fun. So why can’t he stop thinking about Victor, the captain of the soccer team?

Favorite Trans* Young Adult Fiction

“I AM J” (2011) Cris Beam
J was certain everyone would eventually understand who he really was; a boy mistakenly born as a girl. An inspiring story of self-discovery and of finding your own path.

“Beautiful Music for Ugly Children” (2012) by Kristin Cronn-Mills
When you think about it, I’m like a record. Elizabeth is my A side, the song everybody knows, and Gabe is my B side--not heard as often, but just as good. It’s time to let my B side play.

“Freakboy” (2013) Kristin Elizabeth Clark
In razor-sharp verse, Brendan tries to understand his sexual identity, Vanessa fights to keep her relationship alive, and Angel struggles to confront her demons.

“Being Emily” (2013)
They say that whoever you are it’s okay, you were born that way. Those words don’t comfort Emily, because she was born Christopher and her insides know that her outsides are wrong.

“The Unintentional Time Traveler” Everett Maroon
Jack/Jacqueline is caught between two lives and epochs, and must find a way to save everyone around him as well as himself.

“Lizard Radio” (2015) Pat Schmatz
Kivali never fit in. As a girl in boys’ clothes, she’s accepted by neither tribe, bullied by both. Is it true she was left by a mysterious race of saurians and that she’ll one day save the world?

“Parrotfish” (2007, updated 2015) Ellen Wittlinger
Angela Katz-McNair has never felt quite right as a girl. Her whole life is leading up to the day she decides to become Grady, a guy. Why can’t people just let Grady be himself?

Favorite Trans* Middle Grade Fiction (upper grade school/junior high)

“George” (2015) Alex Gino

George’s class play is *Charlotte’s Web*. When the teacher says she can’t try out for Charlotte because she’s a boy, George comes up with a plan so everyone can finally know who she is.

“Gracefully Grayson” (2014) Ami Polonsky

Alone at home, twelve-year-old Grayson Sender glows. But at school, Grayson grasps at shadows. Grayson has been holding onto a secret: “he” is a girl on the inside.

Favorite Trans* Nonfiction (High School and up)

“Transparent: Love, Family and Living the T With Transgender Teenagers” (2008)
Cris Beam

“Some Assembly Required: The Not So Secret Life of a Transgender Teen” (2014)
Arin Andrews

“Rethinking Normal: A Memoir in Transition” (2014) Katie Rain Hill

“Trans Bodies, Trans Selves: A Resource Guide for the Transgender Community”
(2015) Laura Erickson-Schroth (Editor)

“Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More”
(2014) Janet Mock

“Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out” (2014) Susan Kuklin

Favorite Literary LGBTQIA+ Resources

GAY YA <http://www.gayya.org/>

American Library Association Rainbow Books <http://glbtrt.ala.org/rainbowbooks/>

We Need Diverse Books <http://weneeddiversebooks.org/>