

A Quick Reference Guide for Teachers Screening *Valentine Road*

Thank you!

Thank you for being willing to bring the tough issues *Valentine Road* covers into your classroom.

As you know, film/video images are extremely powerful and can deeply touch our emotions -- that's part of why we value them! *Valentine Road*, however, deals with some very painful and difficult subjects and, as a result, has the potential to bring up some raw memories, thoughts, and feelings in its viewers.

The Facts

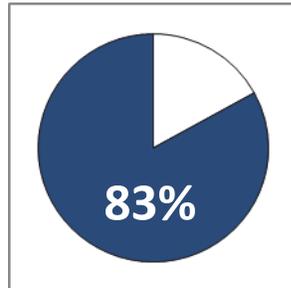
Statistics tell us that you undoubtedly have students in your class...

- who have been bullied (1 in 7);
- who have experienced child abuse (up to 1 in 4);
- who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) (~1 in 10); and
- who are LGBT individuals who experience bullying or fear of anti-LGBT harassment or violence (>9 in 10).

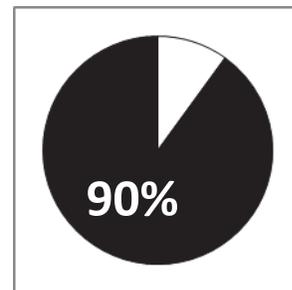
Because these topics are all discussed and depicted in *Valentine Road*, you may have students who have strong and painful reactions to the film and, possibly, with follow-up discussion and assignments.

These reactions might include:

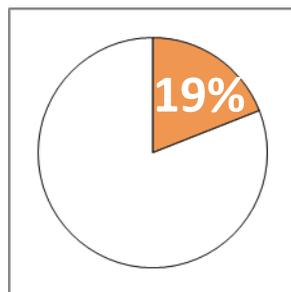
- Dissociation ("checking out");
- Disruptive behavior (distracting themselves from their own emotions, or trying to attract your attention);
- Flashbacks (or intrusive thoughts);
- Overwhelming emotions (terror, fear, rage, hopelessness); and
- Suicidal thoughts or actions



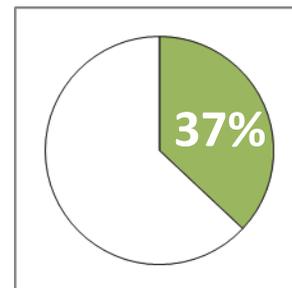
School staff who never or only sometimes intervene when LGBT youth are bullied or harassed



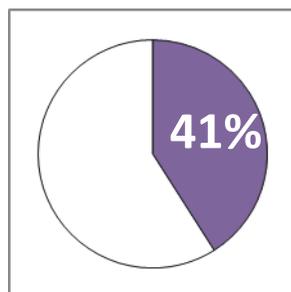
LGBT students who were harassed in the last year



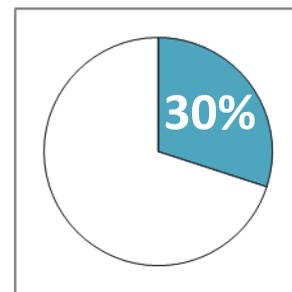
LGBT youth who are threatened or injured by a weapon at school (4x higher than the 5% of non-LGBT youth)



American households with at least one firearm



Trans and gender non-conforming people who have ATTEMPTED suicide (vs. 1.6% for the general population)



LGBT students who drop out of school to escape violence, harassment and isolation

Minimizing additional pain and harm

It is critical that those who are very upset by the film's contents be allowed to stop viewing it, either temporarily or permanently. They need to have that control in order to not feel like they are re-experiencing a past trauma. FORGE will have trauma-trained staff in attendance at Oriental Theatre to sit with, listen to, make referrals, and/or do crisis counseling with any student (or adult) that needs to leave the screening. You may want to think through how you can permit a deeply-upset student to remove themselves in any subsequent class-based discussions without undue attention (which could, paradoxically, lead to more bullying and abuse) and get support outside the classroom.

We also encourage you to be aware of other resources that can support those who are distressed by *Valentine Road's* contents. Please share these resources with students who confide in you or seek your support. [Please note that some students will not share with a teacher because they know or suspect you are a mandated reporter and might have to take action that could lead to them being retaliated against, removed from their home, or have other actions taken that are outside of their control. They may feel safer talking to someone anonymously.]

Continued dialogue—improved lives

If you would like to engage your class in more proactive anti-bullying and/or pro-diversity activities, we suggest a few places to start:

ACLU Making Schools Safe Anti-Harassment Training Program

www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/images/asset_upload_file855_24003.pdf

GLSEN's Safe Space Kit: Be an Ally to LGBT Youth

www.glsen.org/safespace

About FORGE

FORGE is a 19-year-old, Milwaukee-based organization funded by the federal government to provide training and technical assistance nationally to service providers who work with transgender/gender-non-conforming (and LGB) survivors of sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, stalking, and hate-motivated violence. Our primary local work is providing support, information, and referrals to transgender & gender non-conforming people, and SOFFAs (Significant Others, Friends, Family and Allies). Although we do not do much work in schools, we are committed to helping our community and would be happy to talk to either you or your students about *Valentine Road* or related issues, now or at any time in the future. Call or text us at 414-559-2123, email AskFORGE@forge-forward.org, or check out our online resources at www.forge-forward.org.

Resources

FORGE

Milwaukee transgender support group and national anti-trans violence resource
www.forge-forward.org
414-559-2123

Project Q

Supporting Milwaukee LGBTQ Youth (ages 13 to 24)
www.mkelgbt.org/programs
414-271-2656

Milwaukee LGBT Anti-Violence Project

Providing services and advocacy to LGBTQ victims of crime
www.mkelgbt.org/programs
414-271-2656

Diverse & Resilient

Helping LGBT people in Wisconsin live healthy, satisfying lives in safe, supportive communities
www.diverseandresilient.org
414-390-0444

Pathfinders

Empowering youth in crisis to make positive life choices (offers shelter)
www.pathfindersmke.org
414-964-2565

The Alliance School

A Milwaukee charter school providing a safe and accepting environment for all students
www5.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/school/alliance/
414-267-5400

Trevor Project Suicide Hotline

24/7 hotline for LGBTQ Youth
www.thetrevorproject.org
866-488-7386

