

SGV LGBTQ Youth Coalition

SGV LGBTQ Center & Rainbow Labs

Empowering LGBTQ+ Students and Ensuring Justice



THE CHALLENGE

LGBTQ+ youth in the San Gabriel Valley face inconsistent supports and policies across school districts, with only half implementing affirming policies for LGBTQ+ students and faculty, according to Equality California's school report card. Students continue to experience hate incidents, mental health challenges, and barriers to affirming spaces and resources. Increased tensions around LGBTQ+ inclusion have further heightened barriers to safety and belonging.

WHY IT MATTERS

The rise of anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric and hate underscores the urgent need to protect vulnerable youth. Prior to this effort, LGBTQ+ youth safety, mental health, and inclusion work was fragmented across organizations and informal networks, limiting coordinated advocacy and support. With more than 40 school districts across 31 municipalities, consistent affirming policies and access to safe spaces are critical to fostering safety, inclusion, and belonging.



THE SOLUTION

The SGV LGBTQ Youth Coalition built a cross-sector coalition to advance safe and affirming spaces for LGBTQ+ youth across the San Gabriel Valley. Key actions include:

- **Building a Coalition** — Recruited 13 Design Team members including LGBTQ+ youth advocates and adult allies, alongside partners from Rainbow Labs, the San Gabriel Valley LGBTQ Center, City of Hope and local government. The coalition held 19 meetings and working sessions between May and November 2025.
- **Training Youth Leaders** — Design Team members completed trainings in policy advocacy and trauma-informed services, strengthening skills in systems change and stakeholder engagement.
- **Conducting Community Research** — Reviewed local and regional data, including hate crime trends and mental health indicators, to support an evidence-informed case for affirming spaces.
- **Advancing Policy Advocacy** — Developed a Safe or Third Space policy framework and began engaging County leadership, including the Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis, while preparing for engagement with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

1. Equality California. (2024). Safe and Supportive Schools Report. Safe and Supportive Schools Resource Center. <https://schools.eqca.org/2024-report/>