Inclusive Literature Lists

The Billings Public Library supports and values and celebrates diversity and inclusion. We strive to curate a collection of resources that represents all demographics in our community’s tapestry. We believe an inclusive and welcoming community is a stronger community.

This list of inclusive and diverse literature that the youth of our community can see themselves in as well as use as a conduit to build compassion for others is brought to you on behalf of collaboration between the Human Relations Commission of the City of Billings, the Billings Public Library, and a children’s literature assistant professor from Montana State University Billings.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. We welcome your feedback, suggestions, and any recommendations for this list. We will take these into consideration as we continue to develop these lists.

June 2020: LGBTQ+ Pride

Our Rainbow
By Little Bee Books
2019-05 - Little Bee Books
9781499809343 Check Our Catalog

In this beautiful, bold board book, children will learn about the colors of the iconic pride flag

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, and brown . . .

These are the colors of our rainbow flag. Do you know what they stand for?
Every young child is enchanted by the beautiful colors of the rainbow. Now, *Our Rainbow* can teach toddlers all about the... More

**Pride Colors**
By *Stevenson, Robin*
2019-03 - Orca Book Publishers
9781459820708 Check Our Catalog

Through gentle rhymes and colorful photographs of adorable children, *Pride Colors* is a celebration of the deep unconditional love of a parent or caregiver for a young child. The profound message of this delightful board book is you are free to be whoever you choose to be; you'll always be loved.

Celebrated author Robin Stevenson ends her purposeful prose by explaining the meaning behind... More

**Rainbow: A First Book of Pride**
By *Genhart, Michael*
Illustrator *Passchier, Anne*
2019-05 - Magination Press
9781433830877 Check Our Catalog

A must-have primer for young readers and a great gift for pride events and throughout the year, beautiful colors all together make a rainbow in *Rainbow: A First Book of Pride*. This is a sweet ode to rainbow families, and an affirming display of a parent's love for their child and a child's love for their parents. With bright colors and joyful families, this book celebrates LGBTQ+ pride and... More

**I'm a Librarian (a Tinyville Town Book)**
By *Biggs, Brian*
2017-03 - Harry N. Abrams
9781419723223 Check Our Catalog

The Tinyville Town preschool series stacks up in a whole new way with the addition of the fourth volume, *I'm a Librarian*--the latest board book to feature one of the many diverse residents of the charming town. In *I'm a Librarian*, readers get to know the town librarian as he helps a little boy find a favorite book. As the search progresses, fans of the series will recognize many... More
Mommy, Mama, and Me
By Newman, Leslea
Illustrator Thompson, Carol
2009-06 - Tricycle Press
9781582462639 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Stonewall Book Award (2010)

Rhythmic text and illustrations with universal appeal show a toddler's daily activities--from the park to bedtime--in the company of two loving mothers. Full color. ...More

Daddy, Papa, and Me
By Newman, Leslea
Illustrator Thompson, Carol
2009-06 - Tricycle Press
9781582462622 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Stonewall Book Award (2010)

From the award-winning author of "Heather Has Two Mommies" comes a first-of-its-kind board book about a toddler's daily activities--from playing to tea time--in the company of two loving fathers. Full color. ...More

Ellen DeGeneres
By Little Bee Books
Illustrator Elliott, Victoria Grace
2020-03 - Little Bee Books
9781499810158 Check Our Catalog

Celebrate the amazing accomplishments of LGBTQ activist and trailblazer Ellen DeGeneres in this charming board book.

In this beautifully illustrated board book series, parents can celebrate the accomplishments of LGBTQ heroes, and introduce their little ones to the trailblazers who have shaped our world.

Ellen DeGeneres, one of the most recognizable entertainers in the world, has ...More
Spirit Day: A Book about Spreading Joy
By Yang, Joy
Illustrator Yang, Joy
2019-09 - Little Bee Books
9781499809695 Check Our Catalog

In this beautiful, bold board book, children will learn all about Spirit Day and its mission to stop bullying.

Put on a purple shirt. It's Spirit Day Today's a day to be super-kind and stand up to bullying. Because everyone has a right to feel safe.

Spirit Day is an annual LGBTQ awareness day established in 2010 to rally people against bullying. Spirit Day reinforces …More

Julian Is a Mermaid
By Love, Jessica
Illustrator Love, Jessica
2018-04 - Candlewick Press (MA)
9780763690458 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Stonewall Book Award (2019)

Winner of a 2019 Stonewall Book Award

In an exuberant picture book, a glimpse of costumed mermaids leaves one boy flooded with wonder and ready to dazzle the world.

While riding the subway home from the pool with his abuela one day, Julian notices three women spectacularly dressed up. Their hair billows in brilliant hues, their dresses end in fishtails, and their joy fills the train …More

Except When They Don't
By Gehl, Laura
Illustrator Heinsz, Joshua
2019-05 - Little Bee Books
9781499808049 Check Our Catalog
This rhyming picture book encourages children to celebrate their individuality and lets them know that it's okay to play with whatever toys they want to.

*Girls perform to fairy songs.*

*Boys play football all day long.*

*Boys yell, "Boo" and run away.*

*Girls like kittens and ballet.*

**Except when they don't.**

Children are ...More

**What Riley Wore**
By [Arnold, Elana K.](#)
Illustrator [Davick, Linda](#)
2019-08 - Beach Lane Books
9781481472609 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Gender-creative Riley knows just what to wear for every occasion during a busy week with family and friends in this sweet and timely picture book from Elana K. Arnold and Linda Davick.

Riley wears whatever clothes feel right each day. On Monday, Riley feels shy and wears a bunny costume to school. On Tuesday, a scary trip to the dentist calls for a super hero cape. For a trip out with ...More

**Phoenix Goes to School: A Story to Support Transgender and Gender Diverse Children**
By [Finch, Michelle](#)
Author [Finch, Phoenix](#)
2018-07 - Jessica Kingsley Publishers
9781785928215 [Check Our Catalog](#)

*My Mommy tells me I'm perfect and to be brave.*
"You know who you are," she says,

"Just be yourself and always listen to your heart."

With those words of encouragement from her Mom, Phoenix is preparing for her first day of school. She is excited but scared of being bullied because of her gender identity and …More

Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag
By Sanders, Rob
Illustrator Salerno, Steven
2018-04 - Random House Books for Young Readers
9780399555312 Check Our Catalog

Celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Rainbow Pride Flag with the very first picture book to tell its remarkable and inspiring history

In this deeply moving and empowering true story, young readers will trace the life of the Gay Pride Flag, from its beginnings in 1978 with social activist Harvey Milk and designer Gilbert Baker to its spanning of the globe and its role in today's …More

When We Love Someone We Sing to Them: Cuando Amamos Cantamos
By Martinez, Ernesto Javier
Author Martinez, Ernesto Javier
Translator Feliciano, Jorge Gabriel Martinez
2018-10 - Reflection Press
9781945289149 Check Our Catalog

Selected for the American Library Association's 2019 Rainbow List. A reclamation of the Mexican serenata tradition, follow the story of a young boy who asks his father if there is a song for a boy who loves a boy. Como reapropiación de la serenata Mexicana, Cuando Amamos Cantamos cuenta la historia de un niño que le pide a su padre que canten una canción para un niño que ama a otro niño. …More
Prince & Knight
By Haack, Daniel
Illustrator Lewis, Stevie
2018-05 - Little Bee Books
9781499805529 Check Our Catalog

"Victorious . . . the premier queer-friendly fairy tale." Kirkus Reviews, starred review

"An illuminating fairy tale for young readers to be able to see that not every prince would like to marry a princess." School Library Journal

"A colorful and entertaining tale exploring sexuality, acceptance, and young love." Booklist

In this modern fairy tale, a noble prince ...More

Maiden & Princess
By Haack, Daniel
Author Galupo, Isabel
Illustrator Human, Becca
2019-04 - Little Bee Books
9781499807769 Check Our Catalog

In this modern fairy tale, a strong, brave maiden is invited to attend the prince's royal ball, but at the dance, she ends up finding true love in a most surprising place.

"The prince is smart and strong,"

de confided in her mother.

"But if I'm being honest,

I see him as a brother."

Her mother said, "Just go

And have a bit of ...More
It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book about Gender Identity
By Theresa Thorn
Illustrator Noah Grigni
2019-06 - Henry Holt & Company
9781250302953

A picture book that introduces the concept of gender identity to the youngest reader from writer Theresa Thorn and illustrator Noah Grigni.

Some people are boys. Some people are girls. Some people are both, neither, or somewhere in between.

This sweet, straightforward exploration of gender identity will give children a fuller understanding of themselves and others. With ...More

Yes We Are!
By Michael Genhart
Illustrator Ken Min
2018-05 - Little Pickle Press
9781939775139

A story celebrating open mindedness, diversity, and love. Open a dialogue with the children in your life about the importance of love and acceptance with this Silver Moonbeam Award Winner. Families come in all shapes and sizes, but they all share one thing: Love.

It's love that makes a family...

When a boy confides in his friend about bullies saying he doesn't have ...More

A Church for All
By Gayle Pitman
Illustrator Laure Fournier
2018-05 - Albert Whitman & Company
9780807511794

This simple, lyrical story celebrates a Sunday morning at an inclusive church that embraces all people regardless of age, class,
race, gender identity, and sexual orientation. All are welcome at the church for all  …More

George
By Gino, Alex
2017-04 - Scholastic Inc.
9780545812573 Check Our Catalog

The unforgettable debut from Stonewall Award Winner Alex Gino.

George joins the Scholastic Gold line, which features award-winning and beloved novels. Includes exclusive bonus content

When people look at George, they think they see a boy. But she knows she's not a boy. She knows she's a girl.

George thinks she'll have to keep this a secret forever. Then her  …More

The Pants Project
By Clarke, Cat
2017-03 - Sourcebooks Young Readers
9781492638094 Check Our Catalog

Age Level: 9 and up - Grade Level: 4 to 9

"My name is Liv (Not Olivia)... I'm not technically a girl.

I'm Transgender. Which is a bit like being a transformer. Only not quite as cool because I probably won't get to save the world one day."

Liv knows he was always meant to be a boy, but with his new school's terrible dress code, he can't even  …More
The Other Boy
By Hennessey, M. G.
Illustrator Monster, Sfe R.
2016-09 - HarperCollins
9780062427663 Check Our Catalog

A beautifully heartfelt story about one boy's journey toward acceptance. A book that Jill Soloway, the award-winning creator of Transparent, called "a terrific read for all ages" and Ami Polonsky, author of Gracefully Grayson, called "an emotionally complex and achingly real read."

Twelve-year-old Shane Woods is just a regular boy. He loves pitching for his baseball …More

Zenobia July
By Bunker, Lisa
2019-05 - Viking Books for Young Readers
9780451479402 Check Our Catalog

The critically acclaimed author of Felix Yz crafts a bold, heartfelt story about a trans girl solving a cyber mystery and coming into her own.

Zenobia July is starting a new life. She used to live in Arizona with her father; now she's in Maine with her aunts. She used to spend most of her time behind a computer screen, improving her impressive coding and hacking skills; now she's …More

Star-Crossed
By Dee, Barbara
2017-03 - Aladdin Paperbacks
9781481478489 Check Our Catalog

"Star-Crossed delighted me Barbara Dee has a light touch and a pitch-perfect middle school voice. This book will have you laughing and groaning in sympathy with crush-addled Mattie and eagerly turning pages. Mattie and her classmates charmed me with their kindness, their humor, their uncertainty, their devotion to one another and to Shakespeare Barbara masterfully sprinkles the bard's …More
The Mighty Heart of Sunny St. James
By Blake, Ashley Herr
2019-03 - Little, Brown Books for Young Readers
9780316515535 Check Our Catalog

Twelve-year-old Sunny St. James navigates heart surgery, reconnecting with her lost mother, first kisses, and emerging feelings for another girl in this stunning, heartfelt novel--perfect for fans of Ali Benjamin and Erin Entrada Kelly.

When Sunny St. James receives a new heart, she decides to set off on a "New Life Plan": 1) do awesome amazing things she could never do ...

Nate Expectations
By Federle, Tim
2018-09 - Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers
9781481404129 Check Our Catalog

3rd book in Better Nate than ever series

"The Nate series by Tim Federle is a wonderful evocation of what it's like to be a theater kid. Highly recommended." --Lin-Manuel Miranda, star and creator of the musical, Hamilton

Third time's a charm Nate Foster returns home to Jankburg, Pennsylvania, to face his biggest challenge yet--high school--in this final novel in the Lambda Literary Award-winning Nate trilogy, which ...

King of the Dragonflies
By Callender, Kheryn
2020-02 - Scholastic Press
9781338129335 Check Our Catalog

In a small but turbulent Louisiana town, one boy's grief takes him beyond the bayous of his backyard, to learn that there is no right way to be yourself.

FOUR STARRED REVIEWS

Booklist
Hurricane Child
By Callender, Kheryn
Author Callender, Kacen
2018-03 - Scholastic Press
9781338129304 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Stonewall Book Award (2019)

Prepare to be swept up by this exquisite novel that reminds us that grief and love can open the world in mystical ways.

Winner of the Stonewall Book Award
Winner of the Lambda Literary Award

Caroline Murphy is a Hurricane Child.

Being born during a hurricane is unlucky, and twelve-year-old Caroline has had her share of bad luck lately.

Elle of the Ball
By Delle Donne, Elena
2018-03 - Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers
9781534412316 Check Our Catalog

1st book in Hoops series

From 2015 WNBA MVP, 2016 Olympic gold medalist, and global ambassador to the Special Olympics Elena Delle Donne comes the first novel in a brand-new middle grade series with as much heart as there is game.
Elle Deluca is a seventh grader who is tall—not just sort of tall. She's *six feet* tall. And for a twelve-year-old girl, this means that her basketball team has high hopes for …More

**A Home for Goddesses and Dogs**  
By *Connor, Leslie*  
2020-02 - Katherine Tegen Books  
9780062796783 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A unique masterpiece about loss, love, and the world's best bad dog, from award winner Leslie Connor, author of the National Book Award finalist *The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle*.

This novel sings about loss and love and finding joy in new friendships and a loving family, along with the world's best bad dog. An uplifting middle …More