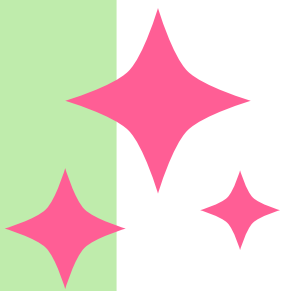


OUT & ABOUT

RESOURCES FOR QUEER YOUTH AND ALLIES



By The New Mentality's
Rainbow Connections Program



**The
New
Mentality**
DISABLE THE LABEL



WHAT'S INSIDE

Honoring the Land	5	Transgender Menu	12
About The New Mentality	6	Queer History	14
Acknowledgements	6	Rainbow Connections Dictionary	20
Introduction	8	Rainbow Washing	22
Proactive vs Performative Allyship	9	Queer Education	23
Mental Health Care Green Flags	10	Dear Service Providers	23
Mental Health Care Red Flags	11	Queer Media	24
Gender-Affirming Care	12	Thank You	31



HONOURING THE LAND

Children's Mental Health Ontario (CMHO) recognizes that its work, and the work of its partners and members, takes place on traditional Indigenous territories across the province. We acknowledge that 46 treaties and other agreements cover the territory now called Ontario.

We are thankful to be able to work and live in these territories. We are thankful to the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people who have cared for these territories since time immemorial and who continue to contribute to the strength of Ontario and to all communities across the province.



ABOUT THE NEW MENTALITY

The New Mentality (TNM) operates as a program of **Children’s Mental Health Ontario (CMHO)**. TNM is a network of youth advocates and adult allies working together to “disable the label” of mental health and mental illness. We strive to amplify youth voices to create change within the mental health system and beyond. We believe that youth with mental illness must contribute to building and improving the mental health system for it to work effectively. Our network comprises youth advocates aged 13 to 25 and adult allies from children and youth mental health agencies across Ontario. Together, we are a community of mental health advocates across the province.

Rainbow Connections Leadership Program, founded by Raine Sparling and hosted by The New Mentality Network (TNM) an initiative of Children’s Mental Health Ontario (CMHO) brings together 2SLGBTQIA+ youth from across Ontario for a 10-week virtual program focused on queer mental health advocacy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This magazine (zine) was shaped and written by dedicated members of the 2025 Rainbow Connections program, a team of passionate youth advocates working in partnership with TNM and CMHO to strengthen mental health supports for Queer youth within Ontario's child and youth mental health system.

We want to thank the adult allies and staff at TNM and CMHO, including Catherine Dyer, Samara Brown, Caralyn Quan and our founder, Raine Sparling, for their invaluable support throughout this project. Their mentorship, guidance, and dedication to amplifying youth voices were instrumental in bringing this zine to life.

CMHO extends its deepest gratitude to the 2025 Rainbow Connections program members for their insight, leadership, and commitment to advancing mental health support for Queer youth in Ontario.

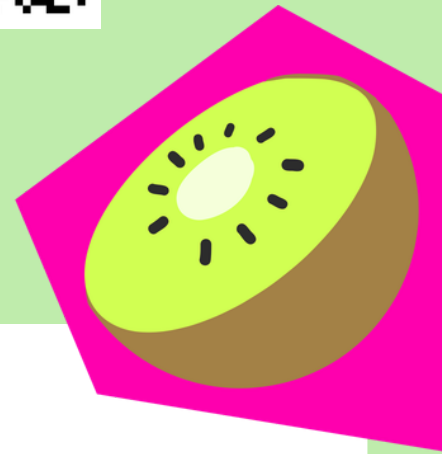
Casey-Wren, Junior Facilitator
Murphy-Boyce Issac, Youth Advisor
Jaycee (JC) Dela Cruz, Member
Crystal Ward, Member
Issiye, Member
Nayela, Member
Naomi, Member



Embroidery art by Murphy-Issac

LISTEN ALONG, Y'ALL

The Rainbow Connections team put together a playlist for you to listen to while you read. Scan the QR code below to access our Spotify playlist!



PLAYLIST PICKS

1. Lady Gaga – Born This Way
2. Hayley Kiyoko – Girls Like Girls
3. RuPaul – Sissy That Walk
4. Christine and the Queens – Tilted
5. Frank Ocean – Thinkin Bout You
6. Girl in Red – Girls
7. MUNA – I know a Place
8. Conan Gray – Found Heaven
9. Family – Mother Mother
10. I Wanna Be a Boy – Addison Grace
11. Can Ghosts Be Gay? – Carpetgarden
12. She – Dodie
13. I Loud – Eva Pagán
14. DEADNAME! – FLASCH
15. Girls Like Girls – Hayley Kiyoko
16. Not a Phase – Jessie Paege, Lucy & La Mer
17. Barbie & Ken – Kate Gill
18. Ken & Barbie – Kate Gill
19. Normalize – Mother Mother
20. Chaotic Gender Neutral – Murder
Person for Hire
21. Dysphoria – Saint Wellesley
22. A Better Son/Daughter – Rilo Kiley

INTRODUCTION

We are a group of passionate 2SLGBTQIA+ youth mental health leaders and advocates who created this zine as part of the 2025 Rainbow Connections program. Along with creating this project, we focused on connection: sharing our stories, building community, and showing up as our zesty, authentic selves. These connections make it possible to create thoughtful, high-quality work that supports queer youth mental health in our province and beyond.

While this zine includes some content for service providers, it is primarily for queer youth. We hope it helps youth feel the same sense of connection that makes our group so special—and that everyone who reads it finds something meaningful to take away.



zest

A POEM BY ISSYIE

Rainbow Connections Member

There's a word that tastes like citrus,
like a kiss stolen in a thunderstorm—
zest—
not just a flavor,
but a way of being.
I wear it like glitter on my collarbone,
like bruises from dancing too hard,
like the first time I said,
“This is who I am,” and meant it
Zest doesn't whisper
It roars.
It paints its nails
and wears crop tops in winter.
It holds your hand in the street
even when the world stares too long.

Zest is loving with your whole heart,
even when they said
you were too much,
too loud,
too queer.
It's laughter in protest,
confetti in scars,
it's rewriting stories
where we kiss in the daylight
and don't have to run.
Zest is living like you mean it—
bold,
unapologetic,
and full of flavour
no one can wash off.



PROACTIVE VS. PERFORMATIVE ALLYSHIP

Here are some examples of the differences between proactive and performative allyship. For allyship to be proactive, there must be an active effort and intention behind the actions.

PROACTIVE

PERFORMATIVE

Land Acknowledgements

Spoken with sincerity and tied to action (e.g., partnerships, education).

Recited quickly with no meaning or follow-up.

Youth Involvement

Queer youth are invited into decision-making roles and their input changes programming.

Youth are asked for opinions but nothing actually changes.

Workshops & Trainings

Regular, in-depth, and applied in practice.

VS

One-time session to “check a box,” with no behavior change.

Social Media Posts

Sharing queer voices, resources, and events consistently.

Posting a rainbow once in June for Pride Month, and silent the rest of the year.

Community Partnerships

Ongoing collaborations with queer organizations and leaders.

Using queer organizations’ names or logos without genuine involvement.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE GREEN AND RED FLAGS

GREEN FLAGS

Pride programs and events are included	Pronouns are shown (e.g., email, desk, door)	Asks what name you use (and if it's different at home)
Hires queer and diverse staff	Staff trained in 2SLGBTQ+ issues	Safe space stickers backed by real action
Is always learning and unlearning	Zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment	Queer youth are included in decisions
Has gender-neutral bathrooms	Respects all identities (sexuality, race, religion, etc.)	Has resources available (books, posters, groups)



MENTAL HEALTH CARE GREEN AND RED FLAGS

RED FLAGS

Pride events only once a year with no real follow-up

Pronouns asked but not respected

Dead-naming or ignoring chosen names

All staff are cis/straight with little to no diversity

No training on 2SLGBTQ+ issues

Rainbow stickers with no real action

“We already know enough” attitude (no learning or unlearning)

Discrimination or harassment brushed off

Youth voices ignored in decisions

Only gendered bathrooms

Treating queerness as separate from race, culture, class, or faith

Supports only when a queer person is present



GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE

What is Gender Identity?

Gender identity is a person's own sense of gender. It can correlate with one's assigned gender or differ from it. Everyone's gender identity is uniquely their own

There are many different gender identities; everyone has one that connects to them. Some gender identities include: cisgender, transgender, 2-Spirit, non-binary, genderfluid, genderqueer, agender, pangender, and gender-neutral.

TRANSGENDER "MENU" of Gender-Affirming Practices

Appetizer: The very first step for anyone—cis, trans, questioning—anyone. You don't have to commit. You can taste test or sample.

Main: Supports that are very accessible to everyone. You get to choose your portion size. It's a little bigger and a bit more of a commitment than an app, but you don't need to have a "clean plate." Eat what you want and pick around the bits you don't like.

Dessert: The cherries on top. These things might not be available to everyone. They could be too expensive, or you could be in an unsafe environment to get it. You might really want it, but you might also be on a "low-sugar diet" right now.



SOCIAL APPETIZERS

- Makeup, hair, nail, and/or clothing changes
- Write or doodle your chosen name
- Journal and write affirmations
- Make a gender-affirming music playlist
- Make a vision board with images to inspire gender expression
- Make unconventional gender *seasoning* choices, like Beards and spinney skirts
- Try hobbies and skills you weren't allowed to as a kid because "that's a boy/girl thing" (the rules were never real, but you don't have to follow them unless they personally give you gender euphoria)

MENTAL HEALTH

- Gender-affirming therapy or counselling
- Crisis support (e.g., Trans Lifeline, LGBTQ+ hotlines)

APPETIZERS

DID YOU KNOW?
You have the right to be called your preferred name in all mental health settings, including while accessing care at a hospital.

MENTAL HEALTH MAIN COURSES

- Gender-affirming therapy or counselling
- Talk with healthcare professionals about accessing medical transition (are you a good candidate? If not, what other options are available?)
- Family or partner counselling to support transition
- Call a friend to hear your chosen name/pronouns
- Change your name on social media or emails
- Join (or start!) a queer peer support group (like Rainbow Connections!)

SOCIAL MAIN COURSES

- Use chosen pronouns
- Voice training or modification (e.g., speech therapy)
- Change your name (publicly or in private)
- Binding (chest compression with binders)
- Tucking or packing
- Daily gender-affirming self-care habits or makeup
- Use gendered spaces aligned with your identity (like bathrooms, locker rooms)
- Attend support groups or community spaces
- Seek or build affirming social environments at school, work, or home

DESSERTS

Hormone Therapy

- Estrogen and anti-androgens (for transfeminine folks)
- Testosterone (for transmasculine folks)
- Puberty blockers (for adolescents)
- Fertility preservation and family planning (freezing eggs/sperm, counselling, and education for folks considering adoptions or foster parenting in the future)

Surgeries

- Top surgery (e.g., chest masculinization or breast augmentation)
- Bottom surgery (e.g., phalloplasty, metoidioplasty, vaginoplasty)
- Facial feminization or masculinization surgery
- Voice surgery
- Body contouring (liposuction, implants, etc.)
- Hysterectomy or orchiectomy (removal of reproductive organs)

Legal

- Legal name change
- Gender marker change on birth certificate, driver's license, passport, health card, etc.



Embroidery art by
Murphy-Issac

Queer History



QUEER HISTORY TIMELINE

1914–1918

WORLD AT WAR

World War I reshapes societies worldwide. Many queer lives are hidden or silenced during the chaos of war.

SEEDS OF RESEARCH

The Institute for Sexual Research opens in Berlin, led by Magnus Hirschfeld, pioneering work in sexuality and gender studies.

1919

1920s

QUEER GOLDEN AGE

Weimar Berlin becomes a hub of queer culture, with nightclubs, publications, and visibility. In 1924, the Society for Human Rights forms in the U.S., the first known gay rights group.

FASCISM AND REPRESSION

Nazis target LGBTQ+ people in Germany (1933), while the USSR recriminalizes homosexuality (1934). Queer spaces are destroyed, and people face imprisonment and violence.

1930s

Embroidery art by
Murphy-Issac





Embroidery art by
Murphy-Issac

1940s

FEAR AND STIGMA

The Lavender Scare leads to mass firings of queer people in the U.S. and Canada. The Mattachine Society forms (1950) as one of the first enduring gay rights groups. In 1952, homosexuality is listed as a mental disorder in the DSM.

1960s

PRIDE AND PROGRESS

The first Pride marches are held in 1970. The APA removes homosexuality from the DSM (1973), and Harvey Milk is elected to public office in 1977, symbolizing visibility and change.

SILENCE AND SURVIVAL

During WWII (1938–1945), queer people are persecuted in camps under Nazi rule. After 1945, queer communities face post-war silence, with little recognition of their suffering.

1950s

RESISTANCE SPARKS

The Compton's Cafeteria Riot (1966) in San Francisco becomes an early act of trans resistance. In 1969, the Stonewall Uprising ignites the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement.

1970s

1980s

LEGAL SHIFTS AND SETBACKS

The WHO declassifies homosexuality as a disorder (1990). U.S. policies like “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (1993) and DOMA (1996) restrict rights, but activism grows against them.

2000s

RECOGNITION AND RIGHTS

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is repealed (2010). In 2015, Obergefell v. Hodges makes same-sex marriage legal across the U.S., marking a major civil rights victory.

CRISIS AND ACTIVISM

The AIDS epidemic emerges (1981), devastating queer communities. Police raids like Toronto’s Operation Soap (1981) spark protests. ACT UP forms in 1987 to demand government action. In 1988, the murder of Matthew Shepard exposes brutal anti-queer violence.

1990's

MARRIAGE EQUALITY ADVANCES

The Netherlands becomes the first country to legalize same-sex marriage (2001). Canada follows nationwide in 2005. In the U.S., Lawrence v. Texas (2003) ends sodomy laws, and hate crime protections expand (2009).

2010s

Embroidery art by
Murphy-Issac



2020's

VISIBILITY AND BACKLASH

Black Trans Lives Matter protests (2020) highlight intersectional struggles. Anti-trans legislation surges in many regions, while visibility grows with figures like Elliot Page (2021) coming out as trans.

TO BE CONTINUED...

The story of queer history is still unfolding. Each protest, celebration, and act of resistance adds to a legacy of resilience, joy, and change. The future is being written every day — and it includes us.

TBC!



Embroidery art by Murphy-Issac

HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

1672 – SACRED QUEER LITERATURE

Ethiopian text, *The Life and Struggles of Our Mother Wälättä Petros*, includes one of the earliest known references to a same-sex relationship between women in literature.

1931 – EARLY TRANS VISIBILITY

Dora Richter becomes the first known trans woman to undergo vaginoplasty, while the film *Mädchen in Uniform*—a rare pro-lesbian feature—releases in Germany.

1936 – AMERICA'S FIRST LESBIAN BAR

Mona's 440 Club opens in San Francisco, the first known lesbian bar in the U.S., offering a sanctuary to queer women and drag performers.

1955 – LESBIAN RIGHTS ORGANIZE

The Daughters of Bilitis form in San Francisco as the first lesbian rights group in the U.S., co-founded by Mary (a Chicana activist), establishing vital early advocacy.

1965 – QUEER CHARITABLE COURTS

José Julio Sarria, the first openly gay candidate for public office, founded the Imperial Court System—a philanthropic network rooted in drag and queer performance.

1971 – "WE DEMAND!" FOR RIGHTS

In Ottawa, queer activists launch the We Demand rally, presenting 10 legal demands to Parliament—from immigration rights to removal of "buggery" as criminal grounds. These demands are later enacted.

1973 – CANADA PRIDE WEEK DEBUTS

Pride Week across major Canadian cities, blending arts, rallies, and solidarity as a one-time national LGBT rights event that laid groundwork for future Pride.

1979 – RADICAL FAERIES & SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE

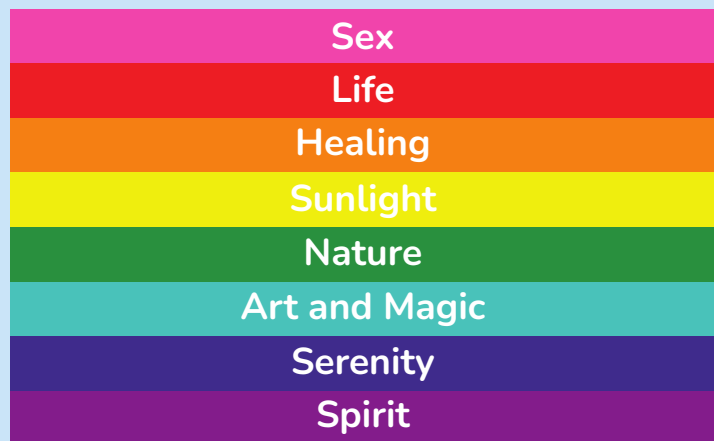
Founded in San Francisco, the Radical Faeries offer a spiritual, queer space challenging gender norms. The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence use drag and satire to combat intolerance and raise AIDS awareness.

1989 – QUEER MEDIA MOMENTUM

Stonewall (UK) was co-founded by Sir Ian McKellen and others in response to anti-LGBT legislation. In the same year, the soap "Eastenders" airs Britain's first same-sex kiss on live TV.

THE ORIGINAL PRIDE FLAG

Colours and
Their Meanings



Embroidery art by Murphy-Issac

RAINBOW CONNECTIONS DICTIONARY

These terms used by participants of the Rainbow Connections program, but they are not exclusive to the program or 2SLGBTQIA+ young people. Many of the words used are shared by other groups, such as people of colour.

Term	Definition
Zesty	A Rainbow Connections special: we are all zesty here.
Fruity	A tongue-in-cheek way of implying someone might be queer or acts in a camp, colorful, or flamboyant way.
Slay	To do something exceptionally well with confidence and flair; often used as praise.

Term	Definition
Iconic	Adjective: A state of being
Girl	A versatile slang word used to address anyone (regardless of gender) in a dramatic, affectionate, or sassy way.
Girly pop	A fun, affectionate way to refer to a close friend (regardless of gender), usually in an upbeat or campy tone.
Yaaaaaaas, yass, or yassssss	An enthusiastic cheer of support, excitement, or approval; often stretched into yaaasss for emphasis.
Eats, ate	A way to say someone did something really well (like "slay" but often with more emphasis on style or performance). Eats is present tense, ate is past tense.
Mother	A queer icon or community leader. It may refer to stars like Lady Gaga and Mitski who guide and support younger queer folks.
Sapphic	From poet Sappho, now used to describe women (and some nonbinary folks) who love women.
Enby/NB	"Enby" is a term for someone whose gender identity is not exclusively male or female.
Boots	An intensifier that you can use to compliment someone.
I'm a rat/possum/trash panda	A silly inside joke a lot of queer youth use to express their soul.
Werk	To display skills or talent in a confident, impressive manner.

RAINBOW WASHING

PRONOUNS = MORE THAN A CHECKBOX

Asking isn't enough—it needs to come with effort, consistency, and follow-through.

A RAINBOW STICKER ≠ SAFETY

Visibility symbols must be paired with training, education, and ACTION. Invest in peer-led queer advocacy and apply it to ALL youth, not just “already affirming” circles.

SUPPORT MUST BE LIVED

Show it daily in practice and in policy. Urgent concerns can't be brushed off as “small” or “personal problems.”

NORMALIZE QUEER PRESENCE

Remind yourself and others daily: we exist. No exceptions.

THIS IS ABOUT PEOPLE, NOT POLITICS

Practice empathy and respond to the human in front of you.

ACCOUNTABILITY IS EVERYONE'S JOB

Cis and straight people must be active allies, holding each other accountable even when no visibly queer person is present.

NO BACKSLIDING

Knowledge should grow and spread—like a zine—passed to the next person, not forgotten.

STOP MAKING EXCUSES

Most people can learn names and pronouns in under 3 months with practice. If you're not putting in the work outside queer spaces, your “slip-ups” aren't mistakes—they're a reflection of where your respect actually lies.

ASK FOR MORE

Reach out to queer organizations (like The 519 or local options), ask other youth about their experiences, and demand concrete action plans from agencies on preventing and repairing harm.



Embroidery art by
Murphy-Issac

ACCESSING QUEER EDUCATION

Queer history and education have been intentionally suppressed and destroyed for generations. We all still exist and have found our identities and communities. Now, in the “golden age of the internet,” we all have a responsibility to seek it out—both independently and with community.

That means:

- Joining queer history sessions
- Hosting movie or podcast nights
- Attending panels with queer elders
- Creating your own learning spaces



Embroidery art by
Murphy-Issac

Education isn't optional. It's how we ensure growth, accountability, and community care.

DEAR SERVICE PROVIDERS

We ask that you take time to learn what it means to be a strong and supportive ally. Please remember that **it isn't the role of the youth you serve to educate you**. Instead, turn to the many resources available—books, articles, and online content created by queer people who have chosen to share their knowledge and are fairly compensated for that work.

Queer people deserve care and support, not to be treated as a free resource.

Sincerely,
Queer Youth Who Access Services

THE HEALING POWER OF QUEER CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT MEDIA

Many of us enjoy reading, watching, and/or listening to queer media made for those from younger age groups, because it feels like healing our inner queer child. Reading queer children's books as an older youth, for example, feels comforting because we know that there are children who are getting the education and representation we wish we received (and lacked) in our own childhoods.

This is why queer media is more than entertainment—it's medicine. It validates our past, nurtures our present, and paves the way for a future where every queer child grows up seeing themselves as whole, powerful, and loved.

QUEER MEDIA TV SHOWS



ONE DAY AT A TIME

Sitcom reboot following a Cuban-American family, featuring a queer teen character navigating identity and family acceptance. TWs: Homophobia, immigration struggles, PTSD, addiction.

THE OWL HOUSE

Animated fantasy where Luz, a human girl, joins a magical world; celebrated for canon queer relationships and trans rep.



RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE

Reality competition where drag queens showcase performance, fashion, and artistry, bringing drag culture mainstream. TWs: Strong language, body image discussion, occasional bullying/conflict.

POSE

Drama set in New York's 1980s–90s ballroom scene, centering trans women of colour and queer communities. TW: AIDS epidemic, racism, transphobia, sex work stigma, violence.





STEVEN UNIVERSE

Animated series about Steven and the Crystal Gems; groundbreaking for queer themes and nonbinary/queer-coded characters.

WILL & GRACE

Sitcom about the friendship between gay lawyer Will and straight interior designer Grace, groundbreaking for gay representation in mainstream TV.



SHE-RA AND THE PRINCESSES OF POWER

Animated fantasy reboot where Adora leads princesses against an evil empire; celebrated for queer romance and gender diversity.

YELLOWJACKETS

A thriller/drama about a girls' soccer team stranded in the wilderness after a plane crash, balancing survival horror and adult aftermath. TWs: Violence, gore, cannibalism, trauma, sexual assault, substance abuse.

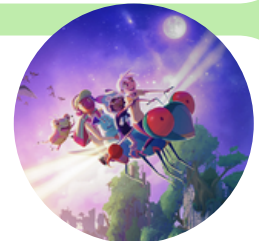


HEARTSTOPPER

Sweet coming-of-age romance between two British teens navigating school, friendship, and first love.

KIPO AND THE AGE OF WONDERBEASTS

Animated sci-fi adventure where a girl explores a post-apocalyptic world; features openly gay characters and diverse queer representation.

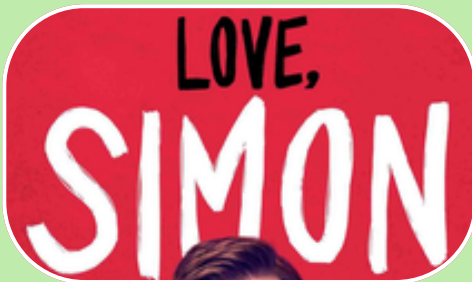


DEAD END: PARANORMAL PARK (2022–2023)

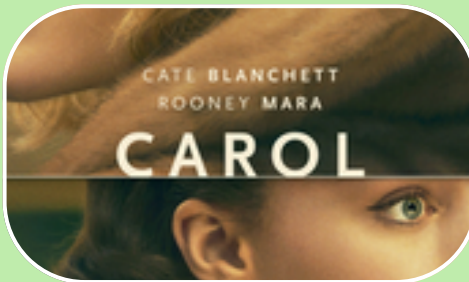
Animated series about teens working at a haunted theme park; includes a trans lead character and queer relationships.

QUEER MEDIA

MOVIES



A wholesome teen rom-com about Simon, a high schooler navigating coming out while falling in love online with an anonymous classmate.



Period romance between two women in 1950s New York; based on Patricia Highsmith's novel *The Price of Salt*. TWs: Homophobia, sexism, custody battle.



Animated comedy about a quirky family fighting a robot uprising, featuring Katie, a creative lesbian protagonist whose queerness is normalized and celebrated.



South Korean psychological thriller/romance inspired by *Fingersmith*; a con woman and heiress entangled in love, betrayal, and liberation. TWs: Sexual violence, manipulation, abuse, explicit sex scenes.



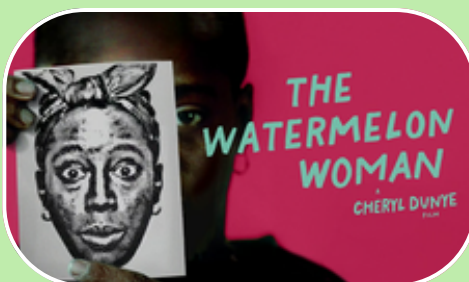
Musical movie about a teen boy who pursues his dream of becoming a drag queen while facing bullying, discrimination, and self-discovery in a supportive yet challenging environment. TWs: Emetophobia, flashing lights, violence, substance use, discrimination, strong language.



Documentary about New York City's queer ballroom scene in the 1980s, highlighting Black and Latinx LGBTQ+ communities, drag culture, and chosen family. TWs: Racism, homophobia, transphobia, violence, mentions of HIV/AIDS.



Road-trip comedy about three drag queens (played by Patrick Swayze, Wesley Snipes, and John Leguizamo) bringing joy and queer resilience to a small town. TWs: Homophobia, transphobia, domestic abuse (brief).



Cheryl Dunye's groundbreaking indie film about a Black lesbian filmmaker uncovering erased Black queer history while exploring her own identity. TWs: Racism, homophobia, mild sexual content.



A cult musical comedy-horror where a couple stumbles upon Dr. Frank-N-Furter's bizarre, queer mansion of sexuality and self-expression. TWs: Sexual content, gender stereotypes (some outdated), nudity, mild violence.



Satirical rom-com where a teen girl is sent to conversion therapy camp and discovers her sexuality and love while resisting heteronormativity. TWs: Homophobia, conversion therapy.



Oscar-winning coming-of-age story following Chiron, a Black gay man, throughout his life as he navigates masculinity, queerness, and survival. TWs: Bullying, homophobia, drug use, poverty, parental neglect.



A satirical, heartfelt comedy about a gay cabaret owner and his flamboyant partner who pretend to be a straight couple to meet their son's conservative future in-laws. TWs: Substance use, strong language.

QUEER MEDIA **BOOKS**

THEY BOTH DIE AT THE END BY ADAM SILVERA

A heartbreaking YA novel where two boys meet through an app that tells them they will die that day, spending their last hours together finding love and meaning. TWs: Death, grief, homophobia, violence.



ARISTOTLE AND DANTE DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE BY BENJAMIN ALIRE SÁENZ

A tender coming-of-age story about two Mexican-American boys in the 1980s who form a deep friendship that slowly blossoms into romance. TWs: Homophobia, violence, injury, brief mentions of war trauma.

RED, WHITE & ROYAL BLUE BY CASEY MCQUISTON

A romantic comedy about the son of the U.S. president and a British prince whose rivalry turns into a secret love story. TWs: Homophobia, political tension, sexual content.





THIS IS HOW YOU LOSE THE TIME WAR BY AMAL EL-MOHTAR & MAX GLADSTONE (2019)

A poetic sci-fi novella about two rival time-travelling agents, Red and Blue, who begin exchanging letters that grow into a secret romance across timelines. TWs: Violence, war imagery, existential themes.

HELL THAT FOLLOWS WITH US BY ANDREW JOSEPH WHITE

A young adult dystopian horror novel blending LGBTQ+ themes, body horror, religious extremism, and post-apocalyptic survival. TWs: Body horror, religious trauma, transphobia, violence, suicide, cult behaviour, self-harm, deadnaming.



THE SPIRIT BARES ITS TEETH BY ANDREW JOSEPH WHITE

A young adult gothic horror novel centering on Silas Bell, a trans autistic teen in Victorian London, who uncovers supernatural secrets while confined in a brutal asylum. TWs: Institutional abuse, transphobia, ableism, self-harm, suicide, death, violence, confinement.

COMPOUND FRACTURE BY ANDREW JOSEPH WHITE

A young adult Appalachian thriller following Miles, a trans autistic teen fighting corruption and systemic violence in his conservative town while being haunted by his ancestor's ghost. TWs: Transphobia, physical assault, gun violence, ableism, hate crimes, self-harm, death.

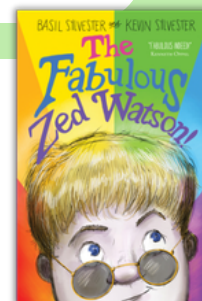


OLD WOUNDS BY LOGAN-ASHLEY KISNER

A young adult horror novel focusing on two trans teens stranded in a town with a deadly supernatural tradition, blending LGBTQ+ themes and body horror. TWs: Transphobia, body horror, violence, ritual sacrifice, parental rejection, suicide.

THE FABULOUS ZED WATSON BY BASIL AND KEVIN SYLVESTER

A middle-grade road-trip adventure following Zed, a non-binary tween, as they journey to find a lost manuscript while exploring themes of identity and friendship. TWs: Misgendering, deadnaming, mild queerphobia, bullying (handled gently).





FIVE STAR SHOUTOUTS



Yellowjackets

PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER, HORROR, MYSTERY, SURVIVAL DRAMA

Yellowjackets isn't just a survival drama—it's a raw, messy, unapologetically queer story about what it means to love, lose, and live authentically even when the world feels brutal. Watching queer characters not just exist, but be central to the narrative, is both refreshing and deeply validating. The show doesn't reduce queerness to a side plot; instead, it's woven into the very fabric of the characters' lives, as complicated and beautiful as it is in real life.

As queer youth, seeing sapphic relationships and identities explored in ways that are both tender and flawed feels groundbreaking. It gives us representation that is imperfect but real—characters who are messy, emotional, and powerful without ever being stereotypes. The show proves that queer love and survival are not only possible but necessary, even in the darkest circumstances. For queer audiences, Yellowjackets is a reminder that our stories matter—that our connections, even in the face of trauma, are powerful forms of resistance. It's haunting, thrilling, and queer at its core, and that's exactly why it deserves five stars.

Trigger Warnings: gore, death, trauma, cannibalism, blood, substance use, animal death, and depictions of abuse.

Lady Gaga

POP, DANCE, ELECTRONIC, JAZZ, EXPERIMENTAL

Lady Gaga is more than a pop star—she's a queer icon, an unapologetic voice for self-expression, and a reminder that art can be both radical and healing. From *Born This Way* to *Chromatica*, she has given queer youth anthems to survive to, thrive to, and celebrate who we are without compromise. Her music isn't just catchy; it's political, personal, and deeply tied to queer liberation.

What makes Gaga revolutionary is that she doesn't just perform queerness—she honours it. She stands openly with LGBTQ+ communities, crafts music that becomes our soundtrack, and uses her platform to demand visibility and equality. For queer youth, she's proof that our voices are powerful, our love is valid, and our creativity can change the world. Lady Gaga reminds us that queerness is art, resilience, and joy all at once. She's messy, bold, glamorous, and deeply human, which is exactly why she'll always remain one of our most cherished icons.

Trigger Warnings (in some works/performance): references to trauma, abuse, sexual assault (*Til It Happens to You*), mental health struggles, and strong language.





Art by Naomi

THANK YOU



To the queer youth holding this zine in your hands: thank you for being here. Your voice, your existence, and your courage to keep going matter more than you know. This zine was made with you in mind—a space where you can see yourself reflected, celebrated, and held with love. You are not alone, and you never have been.

To the service providers reading this: thank you for standing alongside queer youth, for listening, for learning, and for making space where it hasn't always been given. Your commitment helps create a world where queer youth can not only survive, but truly thrive.

This zine is a small piece of a bigger movement—one where queer joy, queer art, and queer futures take center stage. By reading these pages, you're part of that movement. You're part of a community that says: our stories matter, our voices are powerful, and our futures are bright.

**With gratitude, pride, and love,
The Rainbow Connections Team**



**The
New
Mentality**
DISABLE THE LABEL

