

This comic is part of
**Learning to Engage: Movements and
Sociocultural Theories of Learning.**

For more, visit:
andrewkohan.com/learningtoengage

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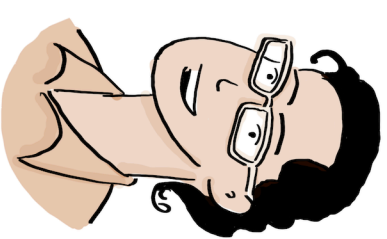


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EDUCATIONAL INTIMACY

by

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Context: LGBTQ Youth Activists

Educational Intimacy is the kind of inclusive intimacy that develops among people as they support each other in working towards a shared vision.

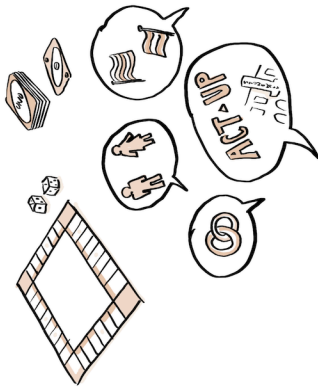


Chroma is a youth-led organization in the Midwest U.S. for LGBTQ+ and allied youth*

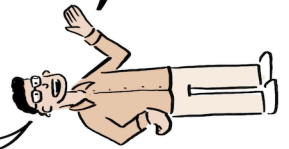


*"LGBTQ+ youth" here means "lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual, and other sexual and gender minority people between 12 and 20 years old."

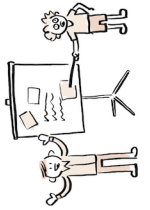
Chroma meets weekly to do various activities, from playing games together to discussions about LGBTQ+ social issues.



I joined Chroma as an adult volunteer to support the teaching committee.



I joined each committee meeting, helped youth hone their presentations, and often drove them to trainings.

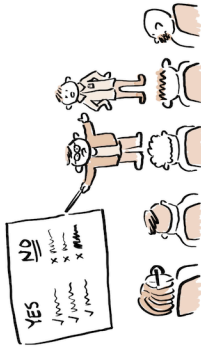


We have lots of discussions about what it means to be "youth-led" and that looks different at different times.

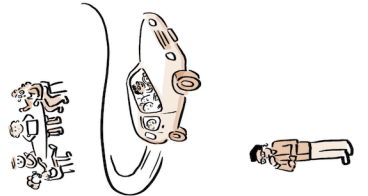
For us, it means that in decision-making about Chroma activities, we prioritize the perspectives of the youth President, Vice-President, and leadership team.



Chroma also has a Teaching Committee, a group of youth who teach teachers and other community members about how to best support LGBTQ+ youth.



For example, Chroma youth gave professional development presentations to every teacher in their school district.



To find out more about the research presented in this comic, go check out: Utamchandani, S. (Forthcoming). Educational intimacy: Learning, futurity, and relationships in an LGBTQ+ youth group's advocacy efforts. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*.

This comic was made possible by a grant from the Spencer Foundation (Grant # 201900131). The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Spencer Foundation.

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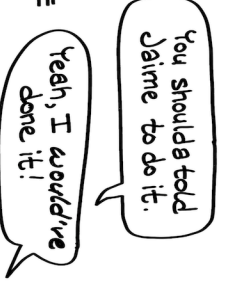
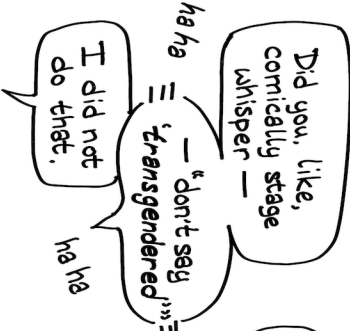
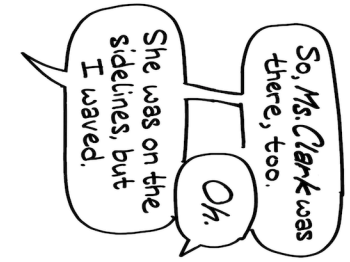
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Educational Intimacy matters for learning in collective action spaces:

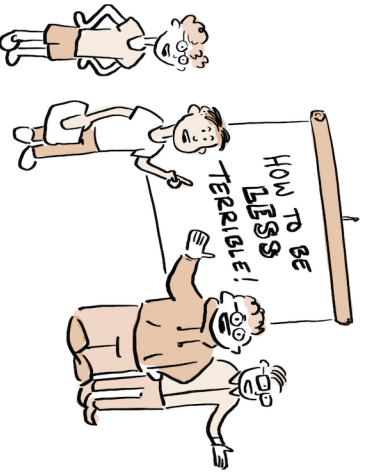
it's what allowed the Chroma youth to productively create presentations...

...to envision how their schools *could* be...

... and to generatively critique one another...



to make their advocacy as effective as possible.

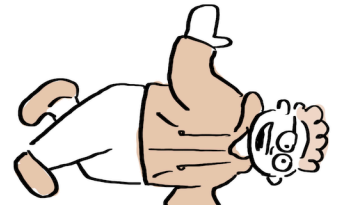
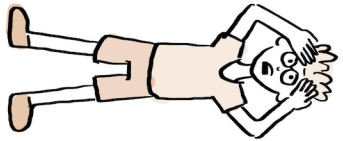
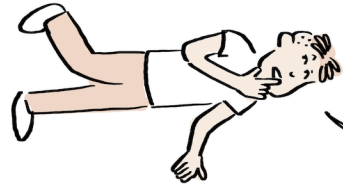


You can tell educational intimacy is there through humor...

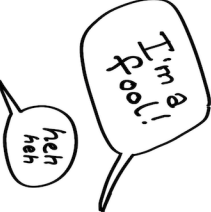
Maybe we can just say that teachers' goal should be to make a space that is safe for the most marginalized people

That's too logical, we're fools for not saying that all along!

To be fair, if it's **TOD** logical the audience won't get it.

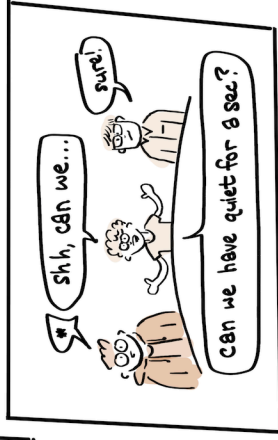


... little moments of self-deprecation, teasing, and exaggeration...



It's what emerges when we pay attention to one another's insights and feelings while getting things done.

... gentle helping behaviors...



... and thoughtfully holding one another accountable.



For queer youth activists, educational intimacy helped us treat each other well *now*, like we want LGBTQ+ youth to be treated in the future.