LGBTQ+ Canadians

Small Talk in Canada
What is “small talk”? 

Discuss with a partner:
1. What topics are easy to talk about?
2. What topics are hard to talk about?

Then, answer question 2 on your worksheet.
RISKY QUESTIONS

Risky questions are maybe uncomfortable to answer. Some risky questions are about:

Money
Religion
Politics
Family
Bodies (weight, age, gender, etc.)

How much do you weigh?

That’s a very rude question!

Oh, I’m sorry.
Asking Personal Questions

Remember: some things are just not your business!

If you need to know something, you can ask politely:

Do you mind if I ask a personal question?
You don’t have to answer.

If you don’t want to answer, you can say:

I’d prefer not to answer.

Speaking Practice:

Ask your partner two (2) personal questions. Your partner can answer or decline to answer.

Do you mind if I ask a personal question?
Sure, go ahead.

How old are you?
I’d prefer not to answer.
OR
I’m 52 years old. Why do you ask?
ACTIVITY

DIALOGUE PRACTICE 1

Emma is at the community centre. She wants to know if the teacher has a girlfriend or a boyfriend.

Emma: Excuse me, do you mind if I ask a personal question? You don’t have to answer.

Teacher: Sure, go ahead.

Emma: Do you have a partner?

Teacher: Yes, I’ve been married to my wife for six years.

Emma: Great! Thank you for answering my question.
ACTIVITY

DIALOGUE PRACTICE 2
Emma is at the community centre. She wants to know if the teacher has a girlfriend or a boyfriend.

The teacher doesn’t want to answer.

Emma: Excuse me, do you mind if I ask a personal question? You don’t have to answer.
Teacher: Sure, go ahead.
Emma: Do you have a partner?
Teacher: Oh, I’d prefer not to answer that question.
Emma: Of course, no problem.
Emma is at a party. She doesn’t know if Sam is a man or a woman. She decides to ask about Sam’s pronouns, because it is rude to ask if Sam is a man or a woman.

**Emma:** Excuse me, do you mind if I ask a personal question? You don’t have to answer.

**Sam:** Sure, go ahead.

**Emma:** What are your pronouns?

**Sam:** My pronouns are they/them.

**Emma:** Thank you!
Emma is in English class, and there is a new student. She wants to know if the new student goes to church.

**Emma:** Excuse me, do you mind if I ask a personal question? You don’t have to answer.

**Yong:** Okay, go ahead.

**Emma:** Do you go to church?

**Yong:** No, I do not go to church.

**Emma:** Thank you for answering my question!
Discussion Questions

1. Who can you use small talk with?

2. What is the most interesting thing you learned today?