

Do it Like Dru:
Fostering Unity
and Inclusion
through LGBTQ+
Student Alliances



ABOUT DREW

Christopher Andrew Leinonen, known to friends as Drew (Dru), was born on June 1, 1984, in Detroit, Michigan. As a youth, he and his mother Christine moved to the Tampa Bay area in Florida. This is where he thrived as a son, friend, and advocate. At the age of 17, Drew started the very first Gay-Straight Alliance at Seminole High School, a move that would eventually earn him the Anne Frank Humanitarian Award from the St. Petersburg Holocaust Museum. Drew always believed that everyone deserved to feel loved, welcomed, and affirmed.

Drew went to college at the University of Central Florida, where he was very active in University of Central Florida's Gay-Straight Alliance. He earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology and became a licensed mental health counselor. Drew enjoyed dancing, recommending new music and movies to all his friends, graphic design, playing Dance Dance Revolution, and other video games. Drew's presence and residence were always the "friend hub," and he excelled at finding ways to bring individuals together, making them feel loved, and letting them know they had a best friend in him.

Drew's life was tragically cut short when he was killed, along with his boyfriend, Juan Guerrero, and 47 other people in the 2016 Pulse nightclub massacre in Orlando. In honor of Drew, several of his friends launched The Dru Project with a mission to spread the love they knew from Drew and to carry on his passion for inclusion and unity.



ABOUT THE DRU PROJECT

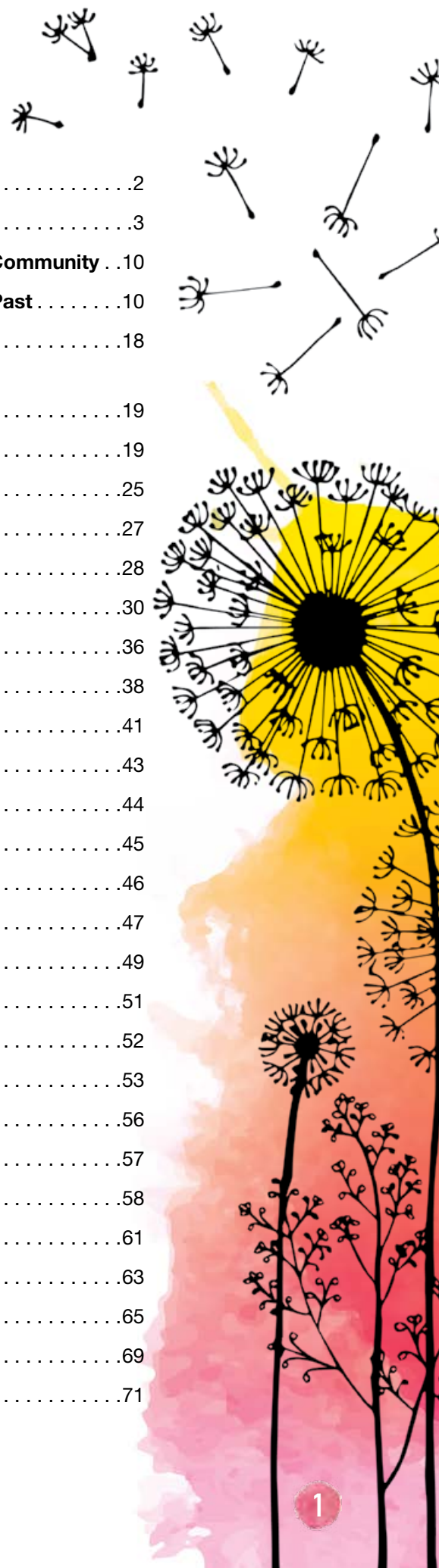


The Dru Project is a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, plus (LGBTQ+) advocacy organization on a mission to spread love across the nation through the promotion of Gay-Straight Alliances and LGBTQ+ student clubs. The Dru Project seeks to provide education and resources on issues facing LGBTQ+ youth and provide scholarships to students who truly exemplify Drew's spirit for unity, inclusion, and love. The Dru Project looks forward to continuing to provide LGBTQ+ and allied youth the resources necessary to become leaders in their community and catalysts for change to make all Florida schools welcoming and affirming of LGBTQ+ students.



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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This publication is an educational resource and advocacy tool for Florida LGBTQ+ student alliances. For the purpose of this publication, LGBTQ+ student alliances is an umbrella term that includes school-based Genders and Sexualities Alliances (GSAs), Gay-Straight Alliances (also known as GSAs), Pride Clubs, LGBTQ+ student clubs, and any other student-led organization dedicated to improving the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ youth. The sections outlined in this publication will refer to student clubs and GSAs interchangeably with the understanding that regardless of how your group identifies, we all share a similar mission to foster unity and inclusion in our school communities.

This resource will provide your group the necessary information about the LGBTQ+ community, history, and terminology, as well as challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, it includes activities to educate your group and school community to advocate for change. When used in conjunction with regularly scheduled and well-organized meetings, this guide will contribute to your group's capacity to develop leadership skills and to improve the lived experiences for LGBTQ+ youth in your school and across Florida.

This resource is built to work in all student-led organizations, at any stage of development. Whether you are just getting started or in the middle of your sixth year, this guide is intended to provide a variety of activities, discussion topics, and tools to use throughout the year. The activities and resources in this book are flexible, and you are encouraged to use it in a manner that best suits your group's needs. We also encourage each of you to learn more about The Dru Project, keep up with us on social media, share your stories with us, and check out our scholarship opportunities by visiting us at www.thedruproject.org.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS (KYR): LAWS & POLICES THAT PROTECT LGBTQ+ YOUTH

As the opening section of this publication, it provides general information about knowing your rights and explains the purpose and application of laws and policies intended to help you combat the discrimination and harassment of LGBTQ+ youth and their allies.

LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY: UNDERSTANDING IDENTITIES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY

This section will set a foundational understanding of the unique collection of people, subcultures, and organizations that make up the LGBTQ+ community. With an improved awareness of identities included in the term LGBTQ+, your student club will be prepared to move forward with a more inclusive framework.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY: LEARNING FROM OUR PAST

Awareness of contemporary LGBTQ+ history will provide your student club an opportunity to connect LGBTQ+ peoples across time and distance. Having this information is a step toward learning from our past successes and missteps while using that knowledge to address the current challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community.

LGBTQ+ VOCABULARY AND TERMINOLOGY: THE POWER OF WORDS

Having ever-changing terminology allows the LGBTQ+ community to explore, evolve, and identify meanings and phrases that speak to our sense of identity and kinship. This section will foster understanding for your student club and help connect vocabulary to the many unique experiences and identities within the LGBTQ+ community.

NEEDS & CHALLENGES FACED BY THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY: ISSUE-BASED INFORMATION AND WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUR ALLIANCE

While there are a number of significant challenges facing the LGBTQ+ community, this section includes a handful of issues and topics to serve as a starting point for your student club. Use the topics provided to reflect, explore, gain insight, and find inspiration to take your student club's efforts even further. Feel empowered to do your own research and add to the resources provided to address the specific needs of your student club or school community.

DO IT LIKE DRU: TOOLS FOR ENGAGING YOUR ALLIANCE AND TAKING ACTION

Drew showed his passion for inclusion and unity through acts of love and advocacy. Once your group builds a foundational understanding of the LGBTQ+ community and understands your rights as a student club and as LGBTQ+ individuals, as well as some of the challenges facing LGBTQ+ community, you are ready to engage your student club in taking action. These tools are here for you to be leaders in your community and catalysts for change in your school, to make the future better for LGBTQ+ youth.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS (KYR): LAWS & POLICES THAT PROTECT LGBTQ+ YOUTH



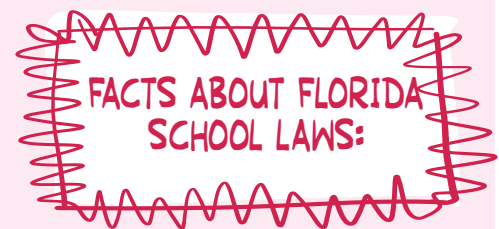
LGBTQ+ students, unfortunately, face discrimination and harassment on a regular basis. The reality is that most LGBTQ+ youth, their parents, educators, school administrators, and other adults know very little about the laws that protect LGBTQ+ youth. In fact, the law requires that adults in schools protect LGBTQ+ students from discrimination and harassment. There are situations in which adults in schools do know what the law says but do not think that LGBTQ+ students or their allies will question their actions. It is essential that we learn about our rights and what we can do if our school isn't protecting LGBTQ+ youth from discrimination and harassment. This resource presents general information about knowing your rights (KYR), and throughout this publication, there will be callout boxes that will give you information about your rights in school as an LGBTQ+ student and ally.

What Does the Law Say About LGBTQ+ People?

The United States Constitution guarantees all people, which includes LGBTQ+ people, equal protection under the law, and state constitutions often contain similar protections, especially when it comes to negative treatment of students in schools. This means that public schools cannot single out LGBTQ+ students because school officials disapprove of being gay or feel uncomfortable around people whose gender identity or expression differs from theirs. When it comes to peer bullying and harassment, courts have made clear that the federal Constitution prohibits public schools from taking incidents any less seriously just because the targets are LGBTQ+. These protections expand to anyone who is impacted by anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination, even if you are not out, or if you are being discriminated against based on perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, or based on your friendship, family relationship or other association with LGBTQ+ people (*adapted from Lambda Legal*).

Local Laws and School District Policies Protecting LGBTQ+ Students

While Florida's state legislature has yet to specifically ban anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination and harassment in schools, there may be city ordinances and local school districts within your state that have done so. For example, on January 9, 2018, by unanimous vote, Florida's Broward County voted to enact an ordinance to protect LGBTQ+ youth and prohibit the use of conversion therapy on minors. "NCLR is proud to have submitted testimony and worked hand in hand with Broward County, and NCLR's Born Perfect campaign will keep working with states and local communities across the country to ensure that LGBTQ youth are protected—no matter where they live" (*National Center for Lesbian Rights*). Additionally, more and more communities are taking a stand against anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination and harassment and enacting rules protecting students from discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Like in 2011 when Miami-Dade School District amended their schools' anti-bullying policy, based on a state law passed in 2008, to include specific language protecting LGBTQ+ students.



- Does state law prohibit bullying in public schools? **YES**
- Does the law include cyberbullying? **YES**
- Does the law specifically mention sexual orientation? **NO**
- Does the law specifically mention gender identity? **NO**
- Does the law also apply to private, nonreligious schools? **NO**
- Is there a state antidiscrimination law that applies (or may apply) to schools? **Yes, but there is no mention in it of either sexual orientation or gender identity.**

There are also federal laws that protect LGBTQ+ students; check out the information in this section!

Schools and School Districts—Safety—Bullying, 2013 Fla. Sess. Law Serv. Ch. 2013-87 (C.S.C.S.H.B. 609) (West); Replacing: Fla. Stat. § 1006.147 (2012); Fla. Stat. § 1000.05 (2011)

LGBTQ+ DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

As reviewed previously, the U.S. Constitution requires public schools to address anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination and harassment the same way they would address harassment against any other student, providing equal protection. The following information examines additional protections that are specific to gender, freedom of expression, school events and activities, as well as access and well-being for LGBTQ+ students in school.

TITLE IX

There is a federal civil rights law called Title IX. In particular this law bars public schools from ignoring harassment based on gender stereotyping. This applies to LGBTQ+ youth because it means that public schools cannot ignore harassment based on someone's appearance or behavior just because it does not conform to gender stereotypes. Additionally, school officials cannot tell you that you have to change who you are or that the harassment is your fault because of how you dress or act, but more about that when we get to freedom of expression.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION/SPEECH

Sometimes, as some of you may have experienced, school officials try to silence students who are open about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. However, students have a Constitutional right to be out of the closet at school if they want to be. Sometimes schools punish students for talking about being part of the LGBTQ+ community, censor students for wearing LGBTQ+-themed clothing or accessories, or because a student's clothing does not conform to gender stereotypes. All these actions could very well be a violation of a student's Constitutional right to freedom of expression/speech. Over 40 years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech at the schoolhouse gate." The only time a school can legally restrict a student's speech is when it causes significant disruption in

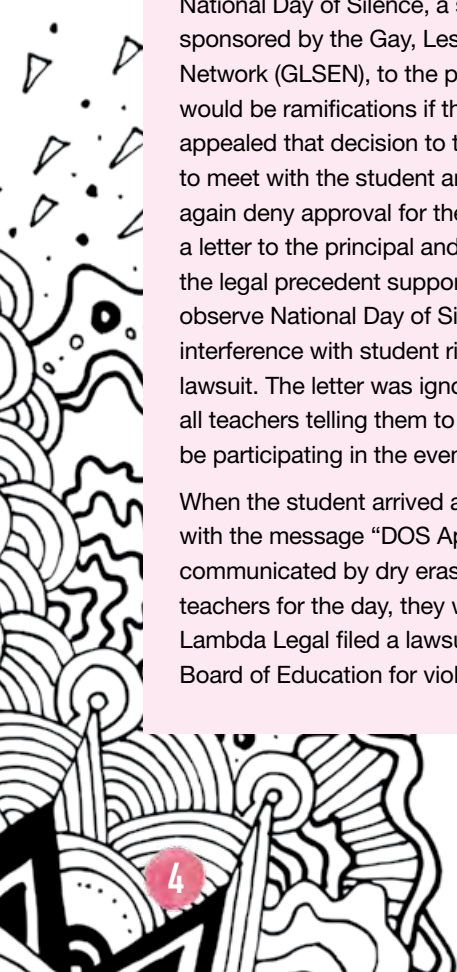
WHEN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION INTERFERES WITH STUDENT RIGHTS:

In 2012, an out lesbian student at a high school in DeSoto County School District presented their plans to observe National Day of Silence, a student-led day of action sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN), to the principal and was told there would be ramifications if they participated. The student appealed that decision to the superintendent, who refused to meet with the student and instructed the principal to again deny approval for the event. Lambda Legal sent a letter to the principal and superintendent outlining the legal precedent supporting the student's right to observe National Day of Silence and notified them that interference with student rights could be grounds for a lawsuit. The letter was ignored and an email was sent to all teachers telling them to send anyone who appeared to be participating in the event to the office.

When the student arrived at school wearing a t-shirt with the message "DOS April 20, 2012: Shhhhh" and communicated by dry erase board with peers and teachers for the day, they were suspended from school. Lambda Legal filed a lawsuit against the Desoto County Board of Education for violating the student's right to

freedom of expression. The court issued an injunction that prohibited the school from further interfering with this or other students' First Amendment rights and required the school to allow the student to participate in the 2013 National Day of Silence observance. In the end, the school board instituted new anti-harassment policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity and a new freedom of speech policy that is in line with the First Amendment. Furthermore, the school agreed to expunge the student's discipline record related to the Day of Silence in 2012. The student had this to say about advocating for their freedom of expression: "There are many LGBT kids in my school who have been bullied and harassed and who feel unsafe. I just wanted to stand up for all the kids in my school who don't feel like they have a voice to stand up for themselves and to help ensure no other student was punished for standing up for their rights. I feel proud that I took a stand which created positive change at my school and I hope now that other students will feel like they can stand up against bullying too"

Lambda Legal Resolves Lawsuit Against DeSoto County Schools on Behalf of Lesbian Student



the classroom. It is often those same school officials who try to silence students who are open about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity that try to use disruption as an excuse to censor student speech, but luckily for LGBTQ+ youth and allies, there are clear legal guidelines about what disruption really is, and your speech does not become disruptive just because someone else might not like it. And if your school's dress code allows other students to wear t-shirts, buttons, or jewelry about their beliefs or communities, then they cannot ask you not to wear your t-shirt or accessories just because it is associated with the LGBTQ+ community (*adapted from American Civil Liberties Union*).

Additional protection under the First Amendment includes your rights to voice your support for LGBTQ+ equality at school and write an assignment, column, or article in a personal or student-led publication addressing LGBTQ+ issues without discrimination based on your LGBTQ+-supportive ideas. You have the right to speak or not to speak words relating to your identity and gender; this means you decide who, what, where, why, and when you are open about your identity. You have the right to share written materials with others and the right to self-identify as LGBTQ+ or an ally. When a school does not allow LGBTQ+ students and their allies to express themselves or be free from harassment, it has devastating consequences on LGBTQ+ individuals at that school. The great news is that there are laws and protections in place, and schools are required by law to protect LGBTQ+ students from this kind of treatment.

TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NONCONFORMING STUDENTS:

Everyone has the right to be themselves in school, and that includes the ability to express gender. There are protections specific to gender expression based on gender identity within the U.S. Constitution, Title IX, as well as any state or local laws that ban discrimination. These protections include:

- The freedom of expression through clothing, hair, jewelry, voice, and mannerisms, even if they are not stereotypically associated with your gender identity (skirts, tuxedos, bows, nail polish, etc.; note that your clothing must adhere to school dress codes)
- The right to not only be transgender but also to transition your gender in school as well as self-determine the when, where, and how you want to discuss or disclose your gender identity
- The right to not be discriminated against because of your gender identity or gender expression
- The right to use the restroom, locker room, or other gender-segregated facilities that match your gender identity (meaning the school cannot mandate you use a gender-neutral or the nurse/staff restroom)
- The right to be referred to by the gender pronouns that you designate
- The right to play on the school sports team that matches your gender identity
- The right to wear school mandated uniforms/outfits (graduation drape, senior photo tuxedo, etc.) that match your gender identity

While these rights and protections exist, there are no clear rules or processes in most schools or organizations about how schools should accommodate students who transition in school. There are, at times, many obstacles to navigate within a school system and a lot of people who are involved. There are some great resources available. Check out the **Understanding and Supporting Gender Identity** section of this guide to learn more.

"DON'T SAY GAY" OR "NO PROMO HOMO" LAWS



Some states have recently implemented laws that prohibit students and teachers from discussing sexual orientations other than heterosexual, and these laws are currently susceptible to legal challenge. If you encounter any laws, school policies, or practices that portray LGBTQ+ people negatively, such as in a health class, make sure to document the situation, share your experience with a trusted adult or other student club members, and take action as needed.

Your right to access information about LGBTQ+ subjects, including educational and political websites, is protected under the First Amendment and Equal Access Act. Sometimes, school internet filters prevent this access when they should not. If your school's internet filtering software improperly blocks LGBTQ+ supportive and trusted websites, organize your GSA to educate administrators and have the filters corrected.



STUDENT PRIVACY:

You have a right to privacy. This means your school does not have the right to share your personal information, including your school records or personal information, without your permission. Your right to privacy especially applies to your school not “outing” LGBTQ+ students (disclosing your gender identity or sexual orientation without your consent) to ANYONE, including teachers, parents, or other peers, even if you are out to other people at school. When school personnel out LGBTQ+ students without their permission, it can have tragic consequences, such as family rejection or fear of that, which could lead to self-harm or running away. If school personnel threaten to tell your parents or anyone else, regardless of the situation (i.e., breaching school policies on public displays of affection), how you identify, make it clear that this is against your wishes and document the incident.

When it comes to your student educational records, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects your privacy. One caveat is that FERPA gives certain rights to parents concerning their children’s educational records, meaning that in order to enact/proclaim the rights provided by FERPA, one of the following has to be true:

- Your parent or legal guardian would have to be willing to follow up with the school regarding the violation of your right to privacy
- You are over the age of 18
- You are at a school level beyond high school

FERPA allows students to amend their school records if they are “inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s rights of privacy,” thus allowing current and former transgender students who wish to change their name and gender marker on educational records the ability to do so.

You have the right to keep your transgender identity private, and the school has an obligation to protect your privacy. Keeping a transgender student’s former name and gender marker on their records essentially outs them to anyone who may review them, such as college admissions or military recruiters, and as we noted previously, outing someone without their permission can be very detrimental. If the school refuses a student the process to change or challenge the contents of their school records, they are then violating federal law and the student’s right to privacy.

*Note that there are times when you can request to change other aspects of your educational records, such as disciplinary records related to self-defense, biased discipline, or bullying incidents. See the story of the student suspended for observing National Day of Silence on page 4.

Adapted from Lambda Legal, A Transgender Advocate’s Guide to Updating and Amending School Records.

LGBTQ+ STUDENT ALLIANCES & GSAS:

GSAs and LGBTQ+ student clubs are student-led clubs in public or private schools with the goal of providing affirming and supportive environments for LGBTQ+ and allied youth to meet and discuss sexual orientation and gender identity issues while working to create a school environment free of discrimination, harassment, and intolerance. Everyone has the right to start a GSA in their school and receive the same treatment as other student clubs. Additionally, a number of other laws and policies apply to your GSA:

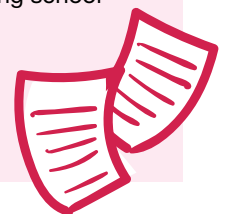
- The First Amendment protects your GSA’s right to speak freely and to associate for expressive purposes, which includes forming a Gay-Straight Alliance or LGBTQ+ student club at your school, so long as you don’t “materially and substantially” disrupt your educational environment.

HOW TO GET MY RECORDS CHANGED:

There are many online resources available for LGBTQ+ youth regarding changing public and educational records. Here are a few resources that you can use for yourself, educating your GSA, or setting up an informative presentation or workshop for your school community:

NATIONAL CENTER FOR TRANSGENDER EQUALITY ID CENTER: This website provides information regarding obtaining a legal name change, including Florida Name and Gender Change Guide in both English and Spanish. bit.ly/FL_Name_Change_Laws

LAMBDA LEGAL’S TRANSGENDER RIGHTS TOOLKIT: This toolkit provides answers to many questions that transgender people and their advocates may ask as they navigate through life, including school records, access to gender-segregated facilities, etc. bit.ly/LL_TGNC_Toolkit



- Under a federal law called the Equal Access Act (EAA), secondary schools (as of 2015, this includes middle and high schools) that receive federal funding and allow meetings of other extracurricular student clubs (clubs that don't directly relate to classes at your school) are prohibited from discriminating against any student group based on its viewpoint.

Based on the laws and policies that protect the existence of your GSA, generally, schools may NOT:

- Require students to get parent or guardian permission to participate. Even if the local school board or state law supports consent rules, they cannot single out your GSA, and the Equal Access Act requires that those laws or rules apply to all student groups equally.
- Deny a GSA or LGBTQ+ student club permission to form or continue because it would or could be considered controversial. This is an insufficient excuse, has no legal ground, and also cannot be used to deny your club privileges that other clubs have.
- Tell or request a GSA to change its name or make it "more acceptable." Prohibiting GSAs or LGBTQ+ student clubs from using words like gay, gender, sexuality, or LGBTQ+ infringes on individual students' rights to be treated equally and to free expression.
- Deny a GSA access to bulletin boards, announcements, or other privileges that are given to any other extracurricular club. If a school fails to provide your GSA with the same privileges or treats your club in any way that discriminates against it, it may be violating any number of laws and policies protecting it and individual LGBTQ+ students.

Adapted from Lambda Legal, Know Your Rights Gay Straight Alliances.

OTHERS' WRONGS DON'T END YOUR RIGHTS



Complaints or protests from others about the existence of your GSA do not mean that the GSA has itself caused a disruption. This falls under the no "heckler's veto" over someone else's speech, meaning that your GSA does not carry the burden of someone else causing a disruption because they do not agree with or support your club. However, it is VERY IMPORTANT that GSA members keep themselves safe and not engage in heated confrontations, as these can be construed as disrupting your educational environment and can have negative consequences for your GSA, as it is often a violation of your school's policies.

FLORIDA MAKING WAY FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL GSAS

In 2015, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals held that the Equal Access Act applies to public middle schools in Florida, not only high schools, subsequently becoming precedent for GSAs in public middle schools across the nation. The ruling came from a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Florida in December 2013 on behalf of a group of students at Carver Middle School challenging the Lake County School Board's refusal to allow the formation of a GSA. Carver Middle School Gay-Straight Alliance v. School Board of Lake County Florida was the second lawsuit filed in less than a year challenging the efforts of Lake County school district administrators to prevent students' attempts to establish the GSA. This was because in August 2015 a federal district court dismissed the original case stating that the federal Equal Access Act only applied to high schools. The ACLU appealed this decision to the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals on the premise that Carver Middle School, as well as most middle schools, offers courses for high school credit and is thus subject to the Equal Access Act. The ruling of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals clarified that the Equal Access Act does apply to Florida's public middle schools, and it ordered the lower court to conduct further proceedings to address the students' previously denied request to establish the club on campus.

Adapted from American Civil Liberties Union, Federal Appeals Court Upholds Students' Rights In Gay-Straight Alliance Case.

PROM, HOMECOMING, AND OTHER SCHOOL EVENTS:

Both the First Amendment and your right to equal protection guarantee you the right to express yourself by bringing a same-gender date to the prom or homecoming. This similarly applies if you are a boy and want to run for Prom Queen or if you're a girl and want to run for Prom King. If you attend a public school, you have the right to take a same-gender date to prom or school dances as long as your date satisfies all the same rules that apply to different-gender dates. You have a right to have fun at your school's dance, and the school also has an obligation to ensure your safety, as it does for all students. Be sure to keep in mind that in any school there are limits on public displays of affection. However, those must apply equally to everyone, not just LGBTQ+ students.

YOUR RIGHT TO BE WELL

Identifying and supporting personal mental health is not only a necessity, but it is a right! In the state of Florida, mental health care professionals can provide youth 13 years old and older with confidential counseling and treatment with some limitations in methodology; visit bit.ly/Minors_Access_MH for more information. Parental consent is not required unless you make more than two visits within a one-week period. Be kind to yourself and find someone to talk to. You have a right to mental health resources! Check out the activities on pages 69 and 71 to get started.

CONVERSION “THERAPY” IS HARMFUL AND DISCREDITED

Conversion “therapy” is the term used for a harmful practice in which individuals claim that they can change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity. It has repeatedly been proven that this conversion “therapy” does not work and can cause severe and lasting harm. There is a movement to ban the practice by licensed professionals locally and nationally, and more than a dozen local governments in Florida have adopted conversion “therapy” bans, which is more than any other state! If you are experiencing this practice or it has been suggested to you, and you need help, find support from a trusted adult or contact The Trevor Project at www.thetrevorproject.org or 1-866-488-7386.

TESTING FOR STIs AND PRIVACY OF STATUS

You have a right to decide whether to be tested for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and to know your status. Federal law protects you from discrimination based on your HIV status, including at work and in school. For example, you cannot be barred from participating in school events, including sports, due to fears about transmission of HIV (*adapted from GLAD*).



THE HIDDEN HISTORY BEHIND YOUR RIGHTS AT PROM

Did you know that your right to a special night was established in 1980? In 1980, a federal court upheld that a student at a high school in Rhode Island had a right to bring his male date to the prom. While school administration stated their support for the student, they banned same-gender dates due to concerns of “controversy” and safety as other students had made threats. This same court ruling stated that how other students might react to same-gender couples did not justify the school banning same-gender dates.

Again, in 2008, another federal court upheld this fundamental right to equal treatment, after a high school in Alabama attempted to deny two female students the ability to attend prom together.

Supreme Court and federal court cases since then have affirmed that policies or actions that block same-gender couples from proms and dances, or any policies created to make such discrimination possible, in fact, violate a students’ rights to free expression and association, which are guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

If you experience any issues while trying to attend or in attendance at a school dance, visit bit.ly/KYR_LGBTQ_Dances for more information.

Adapted from resources by Lambda Legal and Southern Poverty Law Center.



Every state in the country allows minors (under the age of 18) to consent to STI testing and care without parental approval, and in Florida minors can get tested for HIV and other STIs. The person who administers the test or gives the results may not reveal—either directly or indirectly, such as by sending a bill to a parent or guardian—that testing or treatment has taken place without permission from the minor (adapted from PRCH). Additionally, there are often school district policies that protect your status at school; be sure to check out your school’s policies.

NEED TO KNOW INFO:

If you believe your school has violated your or someone else’s rights or is treating you differently because of your sexual orientation or gender identity, there are some things to remember and steps to take to advocate for change. The first thing to do is tell a trusted adult, such as a parent or guardian, counselor, teacher, or administrator.

When you encounter discrimination, harassment, or an action that is in violation of your rights, while it can be extremely challenging, **BE RESPECTFUL AND FOLLOW THE RULES**. We do this so we don’t give anyone an “excuse” for treating us poorly by losing our temper or breaking the rules.

When an incident happens, write down the following information and save it:

- A detailed description of the event (date of occurrence, people involved, what was said and done, where it took place, etc.),
- Date and time that you reported the incident (record each incident and each time you reported it),
- The name and role of the adult you told (i.e., Mr. Janis, Principal); and
- Any action that the adult(s) you reported to state would be taken.

Hold on to originals or make copies of:

- Anything the school gives you in writing or you submit in writing yourself
- If you have to fill out any forms or submit anything in writing, make copies or ask the school for a copy

The more you document what you’re going through, the better your chances of getting it addressed.

Get support:

- Experiencing discrimination, harassment, and rights violations is a lot to take on—you do not have to do it alone.
- There are resources all over the country if there are not ones available where you live. Whether it is an online forum, a hotline, or a community center, find a place where you can be yourself and get reassurance and support.

Don’t just believe what school officials tell you:

- When it comes to anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination, harassment, and rights violations not being appropriately addressed, some school officials either don’t know what the law requires them to do, or they’re just betting that students and advocates will not question their decision.
- Use the information and resources available to you to get support and reassurance that you are not alone and follow the tips and information in this guide.

Adapted from American Civil Liberties Union, Know Your Rights! A Guide for LGBT High School Students.

LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY: UNDERSTANDING IDENTITIES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY

When we refer to the term lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, plus (LGBTQ+), we are referring to a collection of people, subcultures, and organizations that share cultural, social, and political relationships that unite them as a community.

Utilizing the plus symbol signifies that there are people in our community who identify with identities not included in the five letters that are present. This includes identities such as ally, asexual, pansexual, genderqueer, two-spirit, and so much more. It is important to note that when we label our community or use a single letter or symbol to classify a diverse and large number of unique individuals and identities, we are also, though often without intention, implying emphasis and priority for those who fit within the sometimes more socially acceptable categories of the LGBTQ+ community.

Being aware of the nuances and the complexities that exist within the LGBTQ+ community is beneficial for people who belong to the community and those who reside outside of it. Our history, vocabulary, and the way we navigate our daily lives are continually evolving. Because we have yet to find a label or term that fully encompasses the entirety of our identities without limiting them and because it is currently more known, we will use LGBTQ+ for this resource. We use this term with a firm understanding of the benefits and the barriers that come with it and thus commit to being intentional in our words, or work, and our inclusion of all individuals and identities. The fact of the matter is that our community was and continues to be built on a foundation of dismantling homophobia, heterosexism, transphobia, and biphobia. We must be diligent in our efforts to expand our knowledge and then educate others to make our social movement one that is inclusive and effective in remaining that way.

The LGBTQ+ community is associated with specific symbols, one of the most popular being the rainbow or rainbow flags. In addition to the rainbow, there is the Greek lambda symbol, which was chosen to represent “L” for liberation in addition to triangles, ribbons, and gender symbols being used to signify membership to identity groups and subcultures within the LGBTQ+ community. Many different flags have been incorporated into the collection of symbols to give further representation to the many unique identities within the community. These symbols also serve to let individuals express pride in their sexual orientation and gender identity or signify their membership in a subculture. Additionally, making these symbols visible gives people in the LGBTQ+ community a way to show others they are not alone, create supporting or affirming spaces, and allow folks outside of the community to engage in dialogue or ask questions about symbols, what they mean, and what role they play in a given environment. An example might be a rainbow or equality sticker on the office door of your school’s counselor or principal.



This resource is intended to be an educational resource and advocacy tool for LGBTQ+ student alliances. It is important to highlight some historical moments in LGBTQ+ history before moving forward. Having this information will establish the groundwork needed to successfully proceed through the materials, engage in the activities, and take the necessary actions to make your schools and communities welcoming and inclusive, particularly for LGBTQ+ youth.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY: LEARNING FROM OUR PAST

For the LGBTQ+ community, information about our history and how far we have come in a relatively short amount of time can point to the fact that our community is resilient and that we are not alone in our feelings and ambitions. The reality is that others like ourselves have led happy and productive lives, despite the adversity they faced, and our history reminds us of this. Knowing one’s history contributes to a strong sense of community and connects LGBTQ+ people across time

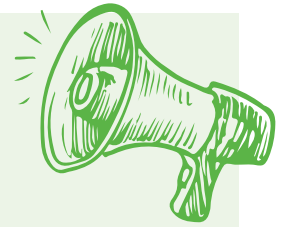
and distance. For cisgender and heterosexual folks, knowing and understanding the extensive and rich history of the diverse experiences of the LGBTQ+ community provides an opportunity to dispel myths and stereotypes, develop a deeper appreciation, and interrupt cycles of bullying and harassment. For us to build and sustain an authentically equitable and just society for LGBTQ+ folks of all ages, races, nationalities, religions, and beyond, we must learn from our past. From tragedies to triumphs, it is critical to not only know our shared history but to learn and grow from it as well. Doing so will give us the tools and knowledge we need to utilize our strengths and gain wisdom from our missteps, and to persevere as we move forward and write our own history.

While the LGBTQ+ community continues to experience acts of violence, hate, and oppression at varying degrees across the globe, we have also witnessed past victories and extraordinary shifts in acceptance and support for LGBTQ+ individuals with a large percentage of advancements happening at an unprecedented rate over the last 20 years. It was before these changes that deviance from established gender roles, including emotional, physical, and romantic attraction, was banned by laws and customs. To assert these customs and laws, public trials and shaming took place as well as labeling individuals with mental and physical illnesses, followed by threats of condemnation. These forms of persecution are still in existence today and serve to perpetuate homophobia and transphobia in many social and cultural institutions. Utilizing criminalization, stigmatization, and other forms of oppression serves the purpose to remind the LGBTQ+ community and society at large that being “different” is wrong or bad, and to be a part of this group or attempt to promote tolerance and acceptance is to risk the same persecution.

Much of our more recent success is due in part to the historical growth of public media in the late 1800s, support for human rights that expanded in the early 1900s, interest, and promotion of human and sociological studies and research about sex and sexuality throughout the middle of the 20th century. A struggle remains within the LGBTQ+ and allied community in attempting to address the very multidimensional and diverse needs of the LGBTQ+ community and its allies. An essential point of discussion when reviewing our history and the information that is readily available is that mainstream representation and political frames of reference in LGBTQ+ social movements have been primarily based in white, middle-class, cisgender male identities. This means that the members of the LGBTQ+ community who hold these identity markers have gained the most influence and power in existing systems and institutions. Be that as it may, this particular group does not represent the full range of identities or experiences that exist within the community, and this has resulted in inequality of gains and protections among LGBTQ+ folks.

We should always work to be aware of and grateful for accomplishments we made and the privileges that we currently have. At the same time, we also have to understand that some of those privileges are earned, and some of those are unearned and given to people in dominant groups whether they want them

BRING OUR VOICES INTO THE CLASSROOM

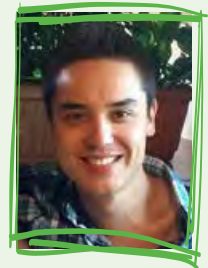


According to GLSEN, an LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum contributes to a safer school environment for LGBTQ+ youth, helps LGBTQ+ students feel more connected to their schools, and can reinforce peer acceptance of LGBTQ+ students. Here are some ideas for advocating for an inclusive curriculum in your school:

Unheard Voices. GLSEN, the Anti-Defamation League, and StoryCorps collaborated to create Unheard Voices, which is a project to help bring LGBTQ+ history, people, and issues into curricula. bit.ly/GLSEN_Unheardvoices

Developing LGBTQ+-Inclusive Classroom Resources. One way that educators can play a role in promoting welcoming and affirming school environments for LGBTQ+ students is by developing lessons that avoid bias and that include positive representations of LGBTQ+ folks. Check out the handy resource and share with educators and administrators in your school. bit.ly/GLSEN_Classroom

DO IT LIKE DRU: LIGHTS, CAMERA, AND POPCORN!



Drew absolutely loved movies, and your club can use almost any film to host a panel discussion or a movie viewing event (see pages 44-45), or show clips in a GSA meeting and discuss why learning about LGBTQ+ historical figures is necessary. Some suggested films are *Out of the Past: The Struggle for Gay and Lesbian Rights in America*, *The Times of Harvey Milk*, *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin*, and *Paris Is Burning*, just to name a few.



or not. Because there are people within our own LGBTQ+ community who historically and currently do not have the same opportunities, freedoms, and privileges as others within the very same group, we must commit to gaining knowledge and using our collective power to dismantle the ideas, systems, and institutions that uphold inequality and injustice. This resource is a section that explores further the intersectional identities that exist in our community and how we can learn and grow from respecting and appreciating multiple identities and their differences. Doing so will allow us to work toward closing the divide that continues to exist in the LGBTQ+ community as well as create opportunities to build authentically inclusive schools and communities. James Baldwin reminds us that “The great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, and are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do,” and “History is not the past, it is the present. We carry our history with us. We are our history.” Our LGBTQ+ history is present in our symbols and our language; it is present in our challenges and our achievements, it is present in our schools and our communities, it is present in our lives and our relationships, and it is being written by us every single day.

The following timeline highlights just a glimpse of both the tragedies and triumphs that have been momentous for the LGBTQ+ community. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and you are encouraged to research further particular areas of LGBTQ+ history, including your local region, politics, religion, race, ethnicity, class, gender, and so much more. Historians and anthropologists have confirmed the existence of homosexuality, bisexuality, as well as diversity in gender identity and expression occurring in cultures spanning the globe and throughout recorded human history, and so there will be no shortage of information for you to find!

For this resource, we are going to focus on the more contemporary history of the LGBTQ+ social movement spanning from the 1900s to today. Keep in mind that in the United States, before the 20th century, when colonies were expanding and states were forming, many laws were created to criminalize those who either belonged to or dared to advocate for members of the LGBTQ+ community. The terms sexual orientation and gender identity did not exist at this time, but other terminology and definitions were used to label folks who today would most likely identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. As you will see in the following pages, some of those laws remained law or what is called “on the books” in some cases as late as 2003.

Sometimes visiting our past can be painful. Coming to terms with the misfortune, oppression, hardship, violence, and hatred directed at our community just because of who we love or how we identify can at times be overwhelming. However, it has been through tragedies and losses such as the Pulse Shooting, the brutal attack and murder of Matthew Shepard, and the constant and disproportionate injustices faced by queer and transgender people of color that we have found ways to unite and fight to improve our condition. We have fought for and won for access to and representation in public offices, population-specific research, and information, changing policies, securing protections, and working to improve school climates for LGBTQ+ youth. These experiences are historic moments that give us evidence of just how resilient and extraordinary we genuinely are.

TAKE ACTION

DELVE INTO OUR INTERSECTIONAL HISTORY.

Use Teaching Tolerance’s activity exploring The Role of Gay Men and Lesbians in the Civil Rights Movement: bit.ly/LGBTQ_Civil_Rights_Movement

COLORFUL PAST. GLSEN’s History Coloring Book is a perfect mix of learning about LGBTQ+ history and utilizing mindfulness skills. Pick your page and color our history! bit.ly/GLSEN_ColoringBook

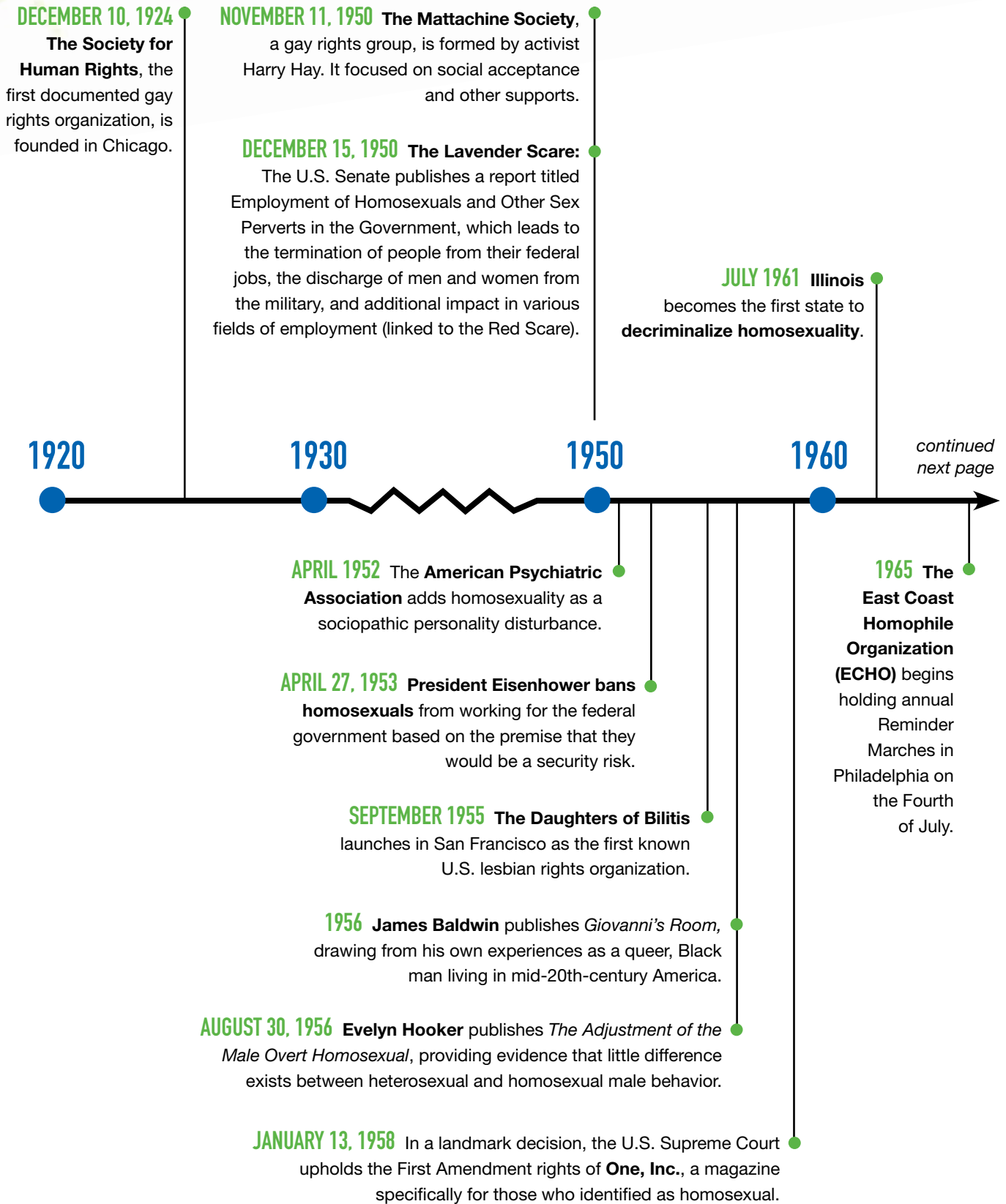
BACK TO THE FUTURE. Technology advances daily, and in ways that allow us to preserve and connect to our past. Check out any of these great resources combining multimedia and technology to preserve and record LGBTQ+ history, as it was and as we make it!

- **Making Gay History** podcast takes decades-old audio archives of award-winning oral history interviews from LGBTQ+ civil rights movement participants and creates

intimate, personal portraits of both known and long-forgotten champions, heroes, and witnesses to LGBTQ+ history. www.makinggayhistory.com

- **Out History** is a digital platform that archives LGBTQ+ chronologies and highlights discoveries in LGBTQ+ American History. It was founded by an activist who wanted a place for the community to engage in the process of discovering and writing LGBTQ+ histories. This site is a forum to learn, contribute, publish, and share research with others. www.outhistory.org
- **The Quist App** is an LGBTQ+ history app and the first product of The Quistory Project Inc., which is a nonprofit in the process of forming with a mission to foster community by sharing knowledge and awareness about LGBTQ+ history through interactive technology. www.quistapp.com

LGBTQ+ HISTORY TIMELINE



1969 *The Los Angeles Advocate*, a leading source of LGBTQ+ news and information is renamed *The Advocate*.

JUNE 28, 1969 Patrons of the **Stonewall Inn** in New York City, a known gay bar, regularly experienced physical and sexual harassment at the hands of the police. On this night in particular, Storme DeLarverie, a lesbian woman of color, was placed in handcuffs, and when she stated that her handcuffs were too tight, the police beat her on her head with their batons. In response to Storme's pleas for help, Marsha P. Johnson, a transgender woman of color, along with others, found items to throw at the police, and an uprising began. As the news spread, more people arrived to protect Stonewall and its patrons, and the police barricaded themselves inside the Stonewall Inn. The events at Stonewall have become known as the impetus for the gay civil rights movement in the US, and rightfully so. Unfortunately, many of the pertinent details about the organizers and leaders who stood against the violence and harassment from the police have been left out or erased from its retelling. The Stonewall Inn was a place where people of color, transgender people, homeless youth, and anyone else forsaken by society could find acceptance, a sense of community, and a safe place to be. Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera and everyone else who fought for Stonewall did it because it symbolized the only thing they had to lose, and that was their community.

1974 **Kathy Kozachenko** is the first out lesbian elected to any public office when she wins a seat on the Ann Arbor, Michigan, city council.

1974 **Elaine Noble** is the first out lesbian elected to a state office when she wins a seat in the Massachusetts state legislature.

1977 **Renee Richards**, a transgender woman, is **banned from competing** in the women's U.S. Open because of a "women-born-women" rule. Richards challenged the decision, the New York Supreme Court ruled in her favor, and she competed in the 1977 U.S. Open.

1970

1980

1973 **Lambda Legal** is established as the first legal organization to fight for the rights of gay and lesbian individuals.

JANUARY 1, 1973 **Maryland** becomes the first state to **ban marriage** between same-sex couples.

MARCH 26, 1973 **Parents and Friends of Gays** holds its first meeting in Greenwich Village, New York.

DECEMBER 15, 1973 The **American Psychiatric Association** removes **homosexuality** from the list of mental disorders.

MARCH 1975 **Technical Sergeant Leonard P. Matlovich** comes out to his commanding officer and is forcibly discharged from the Air Force. (See 1980.)

OCTOBER 14, 1979 The **first National March on Washington** for Lesbian and Gay Rights is held in Washington D.C.

JANUARY 9, 1978 **Harvey Milk** is inaugurated as San Francisco city supervisor and is the first openly gay man to be elected to a political office in California.

NOVEMBER 27, 1978 **Harvey Milk and San Francisco Mayor George Moscone** are murdered by Dan White, a former supervisor, who later serves just over five years for voluntary manslaughter.

1978 **Gilbert Baker**, inspired by Harvey Milk, designs and stitches together the first rainbow flag.

JUNE 28, 1970 On the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall uprising, community members march through New York City. The march is named the Christopher Street Liberation Day March to focus the attention on the struggle for gay and lesbian liberation and is considered the first ever gay pride parade.

1980 In **Fricke v. Lynch**, the U.S. District Court of Rhode Island states that a principal's concern for safety and discipline does not outweigh a student's right to peacefully express their views in an appropriate manner. Additionally, the court states that the threats of harassment and violence from other students are in fact unconstitutional.

1980 The **U.S. Court of Appeals** rules that the discharge of Technical Sergeant Leonard P. Matlovich, a Vietnam veteran and Purple Heart and Bronze Star recipient, for being gay was improper, granting back pay and a retroactive promotion.

APRIL 1997 Actress **Ellen DeGeneres** comes out as a lesbian on the cover of Time magazine. Later in the same month, DeGeneres' character on her self-titled TV series becomes the first leading character to come out on a primetime TV show.

NOVEMBER 1995 The **Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act** goes into effect, allowing harsher sentences if a victim was selected because of their "actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation."

NOVEMBER 30, 1993 President Clinton signs "**Don't Ask, Don't Tell**" into law, prohibiting gays and lesbians from serving in the military while simultaneously prohibiting the harassment of closeted gays and lesbians currently in the military.

1990

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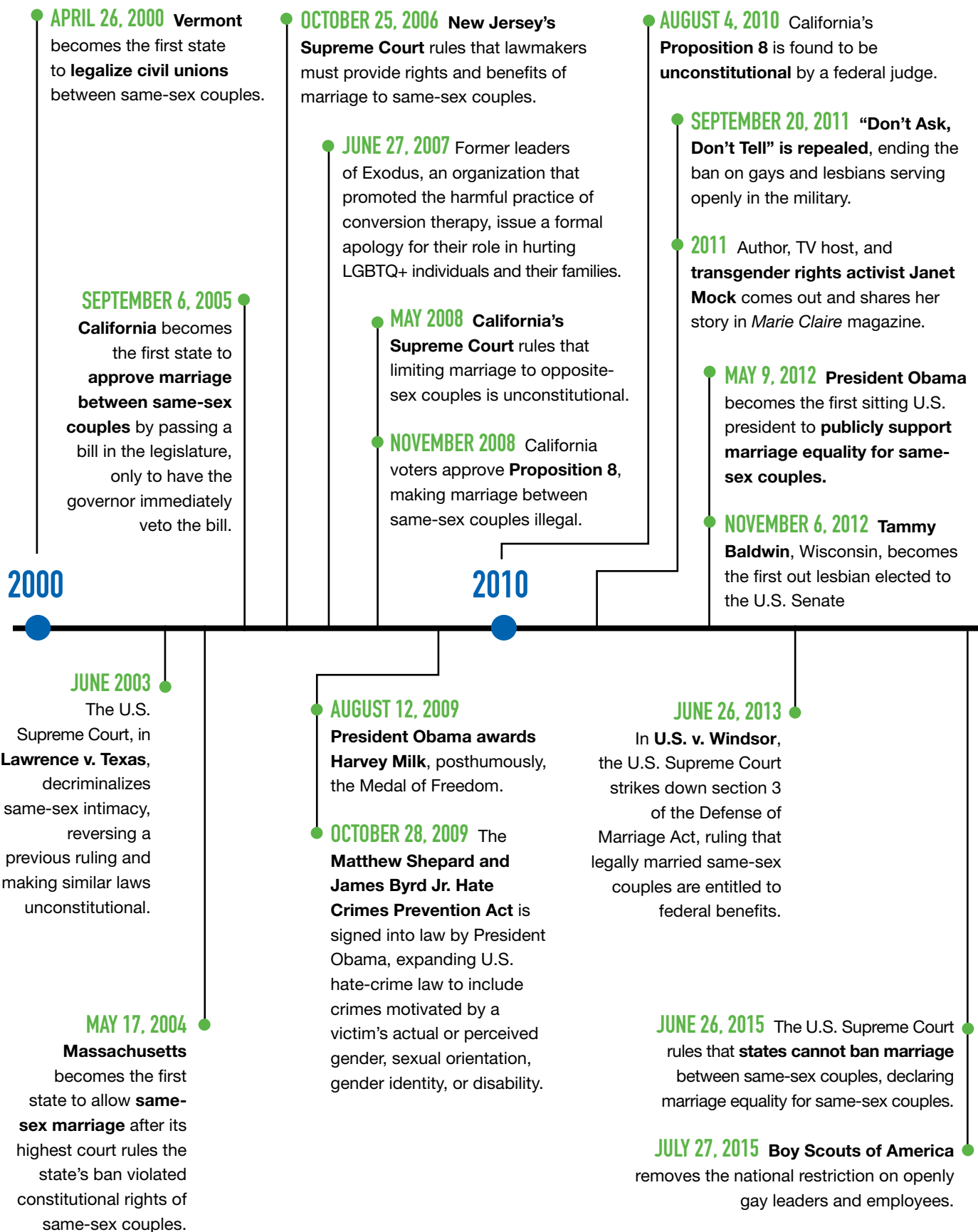
1983 **Lambda Legal** wins the first HIV/AIDS discrimination lawsuit, **People v. West 12 Tenants Corp.**, when neighbors attempted to evict Dr. Joseph Sonnabend from the building for providing care for HIV-positive patients.

MARCH 2, 1982 **Wisconsin** becomes the first state to **outlaw discrimination** based on sexual orientation.

1982 **Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)** becomes a national organization.

SEPTEMBER 21, 1996 President Clinton signs the **Defense of Marriage Act**, banning federal recognition of marriage between same-sex couples and federally defining marriage as a legal union between one man and one woman.

OCTOBER 1998 On October 6, **Matthew Shepard** is beaten and left tied to a fence just outside Laramie, Wyoming. Russell Henderson and Aaron McKinney are arrested later that same night when police arrive at the scene of an unrelated fight and find a bloody gun, Matthew's shoes, and his credit card in their truck. The next morning, a cyclist, who initially mistakes Matthew for a scarecrow, calls 911. On October 12, in a hospital in Fort Collins, Colorado, Matthew is pronounced dead as a result of the injuries sustained in the attack. Eventually, Russell Henderson and Aaron McKinney each receive two life sentences for the murder of Matthew Shepard.



- **MAY 17, 2016** The Senate confirms the first openly gay secretary of a U.S. military branch, **Secretary of the Army Eric Fanning**.
- **JUNE 12, 2016** A shooter kills 49 people and wounds 53 others inside **Pulse**, an LGBTQ+ nightclub in Orlando, Florida, including **Christopher “Drew” Leinonen and Juan Guerrero**, making it the deadliest incident of violence against LGBTQ+ people in U.S. history.
- **JUNE 24, 2016** President Obama announces the designation of the **Stonewall National Monument**, the first monument dedicated to LGBTQ+ rights.
- **JUNE 30, 2016** The U.S. Secretary of Defense announces that the **Pentagon is lifting the ban on transgender individuals** serving openly in the military.
- **AUGUST 5–21, 2016** A record number of **openly lesbian, gay, and bisexual athletes** compete in the summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.
- **NOVEMBER 9, 2016** **Kate Brown**, an out bisexual, is sworn in as governor of Oregon, becoming the highest-ranking LGBTQ+ person elected to office in the U.S.

HOW WILL YOU MAKE YOUR MARK?



- **APRIL 4, 2017** The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals rules that the **Civil Rights Act prohibits workplace discrimination** against LGBTQ+ employees.
- **JUNE 27, 2017** **District of Columbia** residents become the first in the U.S. to be able to choose a **gender-neutral option on their driver's license**. Similar policies exist in Canada, India, Bangladesh, Australia, New Zealand, and Nepal.
- **JUNE 30, 2017** The **U.S. Department of Defense** announces a six-month delay in allowing transgender individuals to enlist in the United States military.
- **JULY 26, 2017** **President Trump** announces via Twitter that **transgender individuals** will not be allowed to serve in the U.S. military.
- **OCTOBER 4, 2017** The **U.S. Attorney General** announces to federal prosecutors that **federal civil rights laws do not protect transgender workers from workplace discrimination**. It is also announced that this position will be taken in all “pending and future matters.”

NOVEMBER 7, 2017 **Voters across the country make history** by electing a number of openly **transgender candidates**. In Virginia, voters elect the state’s first openly transgender candidate to the Virginia House of Delegates; Erie, Pennsylvania, elects the first openly transgender school board member; in Palm Springs, California, a transgender candidate becomes the first to secure an elected seat on city council; Minneapolis, Minnesota, makes history by becoming the first major U.S. city to elect not one, but two Black transgender candidates to the city council. *“My election is what resistance looks like. It’s also about hope. As a city council member, I will be committed to advocating for equity for the most marginalized in our community. [Our city council is now] 15% qualified Black queer transgender leaders.”* Andrea Jenkins

- **DECEMBER 11, 2017** A federal judge rules **against the prohibition on transgender individuals serving in the military**, leading to the Pentagon processing transgender applicants into the military on January 1, 2018.

LGBTQ+ VOCABULARY AND TERMINOLOGY: THE POWER OF WORDS

Another aspect of the LGBTQ+ community is our robust and elaborate vocabulary. It tells of our shared history, and while it can unite us, it can and has divided us. Our ever-changing terminology continues to allow us to explore, evolve, and identify meanings and terms that speak to our sense of identity and kinship. Often when first learning about the LGBTQ+ community, vocabulary is the first thing that an individual or an organization (i.e., a questioning youth, an affirming educator or school system trying to improve their climate) will explore, using similar lists to the one provided in this resource to gain a better understanding. As a result, there exist a plethora of resources both online and at local organizations that provide information about the vast and ever-growing lexicon that is used within or associated with the LGBTQ+ community.

As we learned earlier in this resource, part of our responsibility is to recognize that vocabulary, language, and labels used within the LGBTQ+ community have been beneficial but at times have created inequity and divisions. Additionally, it is fundamental to be aware of the terminology and definitions that existed historically and are currently being used to reinforce homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and heterosexism in our schools and communities. To combat those phobias and the discrimination that accompanies them, we often try to use terms and definitions that express understanding and support for the LGBTQ+ community. We must continue to carry out our commitment to using terms and definitions that show understanding and support while also working to examine those terms and definitions and expand or adjust as needed. We do not do this to be correct or to prove how good we are at it but instead because we are aware, and often personally aware, of how profoundly words can affect people.

As a community, we use terms, labels, and identities to develop concepts of ourselves and other folks who relate or identify similarly to us. At the same time, they also allow us to build and sustain relationships across differences by helping us better understand and respect folks who are different from us as individuals. The words we use and the definitions they hold impact how we think and even form our attitudes about entire groups. There are many times when the definitions or ideas associated with a word are not based on truth and create or fuel myths, stereotypes, or fallacies. Sometimes, we can ignore or rise above the use of a word or stereotype, but their use perpetuates negative attitudes about an entire group that contribute to a cycle of oppression and allow people and systems in power to deny members of the LGBTQ+ community rights, freedoms, and protections.

The terms included here and beyond, as well as the ideas and attitudes associated with them, are going to change and evolve regularly, and as they do we must reinvest in our commitment to be intentional in our words, our work, and our inclusion of all individuals and identities in the LGBTQ+ community. This section of the resource in conjunction with the associated activities is intended to provide you the tools necessary to help yourself and others better understand the breadth and depth of our community's lexicon and the power that exists within a word and its definition(s). When we are learning and sharing with others, we have to remember to do so with respect for ourselves as well as others. All of us hold biases and have learned -isms, whether we want them or not. Much of our misinformation is taught and perpetuated through the words we use. The best way to unlearn this misinformation is by expanding our understanding, and doing so without blaming ourselves or others and being responsible for not continuing to use a term or definition once we know that it is harmful or contributes to the oppression of others.

The list of vocabulary and definitions provided on pages 38-40 is in no way intended to be an exhaustive inventory. While this is a sufficient list and will serve many purposes, you are encouraged to do further research regarding aspects of LGBTQ+ vocabulary and culture. Your research can include social or historical context and a global or regional focus, and you could investigate how religion, politics, or gender impact what language people use within the LGBTQ+ community at given times throughout history. The possibilities of exploration are endless! Also, this list is not a set of instructions or a "how-to," and will undoubtedly need to be updated, expanded upon, or edited by you on a regular basis. This is intended to be a tool to illustrate the unique lexicon of the LGBTQ+ community, build culture and identity, give insight into the evolution of our vocabulary, and educate ourselves and others.



TAKE ACTION

We define our own identity. Please remember that each person uses these terms on an individual basis. While there are often socially accepted definitions or generalizations used to get the point across, we must remember that in the context of self-identifying, we do not get to tell someone how they think, feel, or identify.

If we have trouble understanding the context a person is using, are concerned that something is derogatory or harmful, or just need help further understanding, there are a few things we can do:

1. Use the vocabulary list to see if we can gather more information.
2. Use the internet and other available resources to research further.

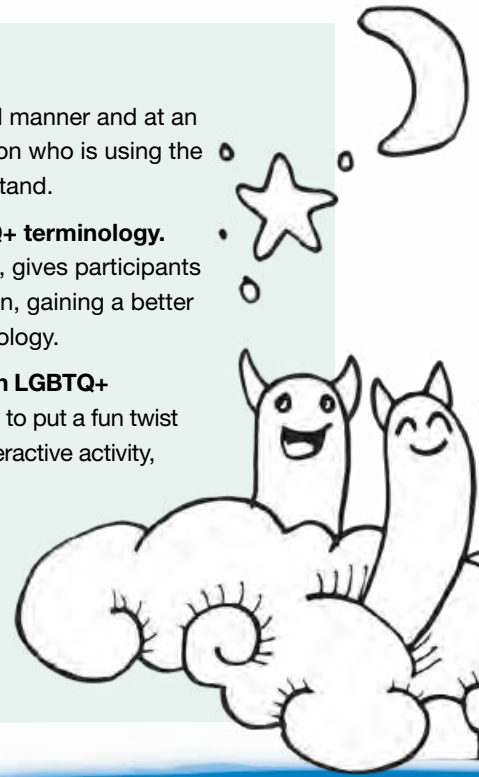
3. If you can do so in a respectful manner and at an appropriate time, ask the person who is using the term to help you better understand.

ABCs for understanding LGBTQ+ terminology.

This activity, provided on page 46, gives participants an opportunity to join in discussion, gaining a better understanding of LGBTQ+ terminology.

Give 'em a pop quiz, make 'em an LGBTQ+

terminology whiz. Use this activity to put a fun twist on the traditional pop quiz. This interactive activity, on page 47, allows folks to explore LGBTQ+ terminology through a multiple-choice quiz and provides the opportunity for the group to discuss the answers and definitions afterward.



NEEDS & CHALLENGES FACED BY THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY: ISSUE-BASED INFORMATION AND WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUR ALLIANCES

INTERSECTIONALITY IN THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

The LGBTQ+ community is within itself vast and full of beauty and diversity. LGBTQ+ intersectionality can be explained as a movement to understand and value the several different cultures and cultural elements that exist within the LGBTQ+ community beyond sexual orientation and gender identity and how those parts of our identities impact our experiences. While sexual orientation and gender identity encompass overlapping as well as unique experiences and traits, our community is made up of individuals who are themselves unique. Our demographics, as well as other components of our identity, contribute to our lived experiences. Some of these components include race, ethnicity, age, class, education level, geographic location, religion, citizenship status, nationality, profession, level of ability (mental, physical, behavioral, and emotional), etc. When it comes to the experiences related to identifying as gay (i.e., coming out, dating, finding employment, etc.), for a 20-something, upper-middle-class, masculine cisgender white man and a 30-something, lower-class, effeminate cisgender black man, the experiences will be different in many regards. If one of the people identified in the example above identified as a woman and a lesbian, that difference in identity would impact aspects of how others treated them, how their membership in the LGBTQ+ community was understood, and how they viewed themselves. Many broad and influential factors affect identity, including diverse cultural ideas about gender roles, conceptions about the place of family, family structure and family expectations, geographical location, and the influence of religion (*Garnets & Kimmel, 2003*). As a student club dedicated to creating welcoming and affirming spaces for all LGBTQ+ people, we must make an intentional effort to understand LGBTQ+ intersectionality and be intentional when forming our spaces, planning our events, holding discussions, and representing ourselves to our school communities. The LGBTQ+ community is not a homogeneous group (meaning of the same nature or essentially alike), and giving attention to the unique experiences of individuals in the LGBTQ+ community is of high importance to ensure our student club and school climate are welcoming and affirming for all members of the LGBTQ+ community.


As noted in the **Contemporary History of the LGBTQ+ Community** section of this publication, the LGBTQ+ social movement in America has emphasized putting aside differences between ourselves to achieve our goals. However, this has led to members of the LGBTQ+ community being excluded. For example, over the last five years, there has been a national and state focus on marriage equality and systemic changes such as the ability to change one's gender marker on government forms. While these can be considered vital in achieving equity for some members of the LGBTQ+ community, they are not the only issues to be addressed. For many, there is concern about the lack of attention and urgency at the national and state level regarding the violence and danger faced by transgender women of color or the fact that in many states it is legal to fire someone or evict them from housing because of their LGBTQ+ identity. Additionally, there are members of the LGBTQ+ community known as undocuqueer, who face an uncertain future and fear of being detained while attending school or caring for their families. There are also those who are seeking asylum from countries where LGBTQ+ individuals face laws and customs that leave them in fear of persecution, including being exiled, disowned, imprisoned, and even sentenced to death, and who face a complicated, outdated, and discriminatory asylum and immigration processes in the U.S. These are only a few examples of the many issues faced by the individuals in our LGBTQ+ community. Let's look at a handful of these issues as well as some of the challenges faced by those living at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities. Afterward, we will talk about some actions we can take as a student club to make our school communities more welcoming and affirming for all members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Race & Ethnicity within the LGBTQ+ Community

An individual's racial and ethnic identity plays a critical role in their sense of belonging, so being able to bring these parts of our identity out into the open is essential, especially in LGBTQ+ spaces like GSAs. Acknowledging race and ethnicity and the role they play in our daily lives gives students, educators, and school communities the opportunity to engage in discussions, share personal experiences, and learn from each other about different racial and ethnic identities. LGBTQ+ youth of color often endure multiple forms of oppression and need peers and educators to recognize and affirm all parts of their identity, as well as the resilience and resources that come with having those experiences. The lack of racially and ethnically inclusive and affirming LGBTQ+ spaces can often lead to a feeling of isolation, invisibility, or that other LGBTQ+ community members do not value these parts of their identity. The LGBTQ+ community is diverse, and LGBTQ+ youth of color represent a broad range of racial, ethnic, religious and other groups. Therefore, until our GSAs, educators, media, and political representation reflect this reality, we must be intentional in acknowledging race and ethnicity and the role they play in our everyday experiences, and advocate for change where it is needed. When we challenge all forms of oppression and educate ourselves to recognize biases that we hold or that occur around us, we are empowering our community to act against injustice and bridging historical divides while keeping to our commitment to making our social movement one that is genuinely inclusive. Check out some ways to take action in your GSA on page 22.

National Origin and Immigration

As of February 2017, The Williams Institute estimated that there are over 75,000 LGBTQ+ DREAMers in the U.S., who also sometimes self-identify as Undocuqueer. The Undocuqueer community calls for the immigrant rights and the LGBTQ+ social movements to come together to share stories and build alliances to expand and advance both movements. Since its enactment, over 36,000 LGBTQ+ individuals have participated in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and 24,000 people renewed in the program (*The Williams Institute, 2017*). While a considerable majority of LGBTQ+-identified DACA participants live in California, Texas, Illinois, New York, and Florida, we want to work together to build school communities in which every student is welcomed and affirmed, period. To make sure that we are creating these types of school environments for all LGBTQ+ students, there must be safeguards in place, regardless of immigration status. The situation of having a parent, guardian, sibling, or relative



SULMA FRANCO is an undocumented Guatemalan lesbian who was given sanctuary in an Austin church because she feared being deported to her native country, where she was an activist and had faced abuse. She was in the process of applying for a U visa, a nonimmigrant visa that is set aside for victims of crimes who have suffered substantial mental or physical abuse and are willing to assist law enforcement and government officials in the investigation or prosecution of the criminal activity. This would have allowed her to live and work in the U.S., but due to an error by her attorney, she was denied the visa, subsequently detained, and put under a deportation order. Franco had obtained a food truck license with her partner, but because of the deportation order, she could not return to her business (*GLAAD, 2018*). This is only one person's story but can serve as an example of situations faced by students, parents, and their family members in your school community.



without documentation, or not being documented oneself, is a unique stressor. Often, these situations cause family members, including students, to carry around tension, fear, or anxiety about a lack of safety and a fear of deportation. These experiences also have a direct impact on a student's ability to learn and succeed in school, let alone participate in other activities and explore other areas of their identity, such as gender and sexuality. However, there are severe risks involved in students being "out" about their own or their family member's immigration status. Every school day undocumented students, parents, guardians, siblings, or relatives face the very real possibility that a routine trip to school or a school event could result in a negative interaction with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). This reality can cause students to hide their identity or even skip school, which violates truancy laws, creating a catch-22 for undocumented students and their families. Follow up below to see actions your student club can take to address some of these challenges.

Gender Dynamics

While our next section, **Understanding and Supporting Gender Identity**, will go into much more depth about gender identity, the fact is that because of the way society defines sexuality and gender, those definitions often influence the conception of our own identity. For example, bias against women can have an impact on a lesbian's identity development, and that development can vary even more based on gender expectations within different ethnic and cultural groups. Because of the role gender plays in our socialization and our everyday interactions, it not only influences our personal development, but it also affects the way we interact with others. It is important to remember that our experiences in the LGBTQ+ community are not homogeneous and that we need to be open to and welcoming of everyone's experience and value them as a dynamic contribution to understanding our entire LGBTQ+ community.

Religion, Socioeconomic Status, Ability, Geography

All these distinctive categories are additional factors that may impact an individual's LGBTQ+ experience and their sense of belonging to the broader LGBTQ+ community. For example, coming out as a lesbian in Leesburg or Ocala is going to be much different than coming out in Fort Lauderdale or Orlando. The level of one's physical ability can at times limit access to events and resources in the larger LGBTQ+ community. For example, not all events have sign language interpreters for the deaf, and not all LGBTQ+ community events are wheelchair accessible. Additionally, society perpetuates a lot of misconceptions and stereotypes about folks with varying types of abilities. That requires us to do work within ourselves and our communities to recognize biases that we hold to ensure that our events, resources, and efforts are inclusive and supportive of the subcommunities that exist within the LGBTQ+ community. Socioeconomic status, also known as class, impacts so much around us, like access to resources such as transportation, medical care, and basic daily needs. When considering the relation of socioeconomic status to one's LGBTQ+ identity, examples to consider might be a transgender student whose parents cannot afford to pay the filing fee to change the gender marker on the student's state identification card. The school legally cannot change the student's birth name in most computer systems without that identification. This student identifies and expresses as their gender, but every time there is a substitute, they go to the nurse's office, or they send an email, they are outed to others. This causes them to have to deal with the psychological impact of not only being outed on a daily basis but also having to grapple with the fact that they would likely not have to deal with these same issues if their parents could "just afford it."

There is a long and complicated history between religion and the LGBTQ+ community, and everyone's relationship with religion is different. Today, within almost every religious denomination there are groups that have adopted LGBTQ+ supportive and inclusive policies and practices. However, there are still some folks who, based on religious views, do not accept their LGBTQ+ family or peers, and this can impact one's relationship with their LGBTQ+ identity, their home life, as well as their level of desire to engage with the LGBTQ+ community at school. While this information is only a small introduction into these categories, the purpose of the overview is to give you insight into the many different and powerful factors that impact our daily lives and our relationship with our LGBTQ+ identity. Do your own research to learn more about these topics and keep reading through this guide to learn about other challenges and how your GSA can empower itself to take action in your school community.

Take Action

Being a student club rooted in addressing issues such as ending homophobia, transphobia, and anti-LGBTQ+ bullying, and creating welcoming and affirming school environments, we know how difficult it can be to get support in discussing issues of prejudice, discrimination, and oppression. We also know that bringing these topics up in schools can be challenging, intimidating, and outright scary. We do not always know how others might react, we might feel like we do not have all the

right tools or information, or there have possibly been times when adults or other peers have tried to stop us from talking about or addressing such topics. The needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your school will vary widely depending on your student population as a whole, the level of school and community support, as well as your access to resources. As we have learned, the LGBTQ+ social movement has not always been intersectional, and this has also been evident in the efforts of our GSAs. We have the ability to change that.

Perhaps your GSA is predominantly composed of cisgender allies, or maybe your club needs to do some work in having its members represent the full diversity of your school community. Or maybe your members are mostly nondisabled or do not struggle financially. Has your club given folks who experience challenges an opportunity to share them or ask for accommodations in your meeting or at events? Has your student club ever considered the fact that people in your community may have to face two closets every day as they are both LGBTQ+ and undocumented? There are several identities and social factors we tend to overlook if they do not directly impact us, and if we do not intentionally make space for those experiences, then we are leaving a part of our community unrecognized, unsupported, and unheard. As a student club, we have a responsibility to make our efforts inclusive and be effective in keeping them that way. In this section, you will find several ways to engage your club and take action in your school community to do just that.

I'M A GAY CHICANA HIGH SCHOOLER. HERE'S WHAT I NEED FROM MY ALLIES.

Speak up when you hear LGBTQ stereotypes, slurs, and jokes, understanding that just as those are wrong, so are racial stereotypes, slurs, or jokes. When you hear them, do not react on a physical impulse. When people say ignorant things to get others fired up, they're just looking for a reaction. Instead, calmly call them out on their action.

Allow LGBTQ people of color to speak on their identities openly without interruption. It's great to support and want to share how you feel, but allow people who actually hold those identities to speak about them first and most.

Do not stand for cultural appropriation. Instead, celebrate others' cultures.

Mari Contreras, GLSEN National Student Council

Race & Ethnicity within the LGBTQ+ Community

- **Celebrate the contributions and resilience of LGBTQ+ people of color.** Recognize and celebrate the heritage, tradition, and history months of different cultures and their contributions to the LGBTQ+ community. Here are a few resources to get you started:

Asian and Pacific Islander: bit.ly/GLSEN_API_History and bit.ly/GLSEN_API_Heroes

Black and African American: bit.ly/GLSEN_Black_Heroes

Latinx, Chicano, Hispanic: bit.ly/GLSEN_Latinx_Heroes and bit.ly/GLSEN_Latinx_History

Native American: bit.ly/GLSEN_NA_Heroes and bit.ly/GLSEN_NA_Heritage

Use the included history timeline on pages 13-17, host a movie viewing or panel discussion highlighting information from heritage and history month celebrations, or do your own research and educate about how transgender and queer people of color have always played a critical role in our community's history.

- **Acceptance of languages other than English in our communities.** Ensure that your meeting and event materials are made available in the languages spoken by the families in your school community. If translation is needed, work with your school or community organizations to make sure you have it available.
- **Be intentional in your efforts.** Be inclusive in your student club's planning, organizing, events, and activities. Understand that we each walk into the room with multiple parts of our identity, and our LGBTQ+ identity is only a part of our whole.

FACT:

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the **top six languages spoken** by students and their families in Florida are **English, Spanish, Haitian, Portuguese, Arabic, and Vietnamese**, though there are many more languages to be inclusive of. Find out what the needs of your school community are and be inclusive!

- **Drawing Conclusions.** This activity on page 52 is a great way to engage ourselves and others in understanding the stereotypes and biases that we hold about folks in the LGBTQ+ community while promoting discourse, teamwork, and creativity to further educate ourselves and improve our efforts to be inclusive of all members of the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Representative leadership and membership.** Encourage students of color to engage in GSA meetings and events, and encourage LGBTQ+ students of color to take on leadership roles within your GSA, student government, sports, and in other student clubs.
- **Build coalitions and engage in collaborative efforts.** Collaborate with student clubs and community organizations that align with the goals of your GSA, or exchange resources between your GSA and the collaborating group.

DON'T STOP HERE. Download and use GLSEN's super helpful *Jumpstart Guide on Examining Power, Privilege, and Oppression* at bit.ly/GLSEN_jumpstart_PPO. This resource was built to assist GSAs in using an anti-oppressive framework, equipping members to recognize the connections and relationships among different forms of oppression, motivating them to work together and put an end to all oppressions.

National Origin and Immigration

- **Educate yourself and your school community.** Learn more about the experiences of LGBTQ+ immigrants and refugees and how your GSA can support immigrants and refugees in your community.
- **Value the right to equal educational opportunities.** LGBTQ+ students, regardless of their immigration status, deserve to be seen and valued and have a constitutional right to equal educational opportunities.
- **Recognize the importance of the words we use.** Set a precedent that the terms “illegals” or “illegal immigrants/aliens” will not be accepted in your student club and should not be accepted in our schools either. Much like the terms “faggot” or “homo,” the term “illegal” is hurtful and harmful and does a lot of damage to individuals and communities by perpetuating harmful stereotypes in addition to not being an accurate description of the status of being in the U.S. without a visa (*Marquette University, 2018*).
- **Show your support.** Display supportive posters and images in the school or a classroom. Students are more likely to know that your GSA or school community is welcoming and inclusive of all LGBTQ+ students. Here is an image created by Favianna Rodriguez that you can post and share. Find more information about the image and the artist here: bit.ly/Dreamers_Welcome_TDP



THE US CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES ALL STUDENTS EQUAL ACCESS TO PUBLIC EDUCATION REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS

All students have the right to enroll and attend public schools, free of discrimination, including discrimination based on their own or their parents' real or perceived immigration status. In 1982, the Supreme Court in *Plyler v. Doe* held that the undocumented status of a student or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) does not affect a student's right to a public K-12 education. The court based its decision on the U.S. Constitution's Equal Protection Clause, which guarantees all person's equal protection under the law – regardless of immigration status – and prohibits discrimination in the application of laws. Additionally, The McKinney-Vento Act of 2001 provides education rights to students experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied youth, regardless of their immigration status (*Education Counsel, 2017*).

Religion, Socioeconomic Status, Ability, Geography

When we are working to make our GSAs and school communities inclusive, especially regarding religion, socioeconomic status, disability, and geography, it is essential to pay attention to the varying levels of accessibility:

- What are the costs or fees for your club? Are club meetings held when some students have to work?
- Are the time and location of your club meetings or events accessible to students who ride the school bus, or use public transportation?
- Are your meetings and events in places that are accessible to folks in wheelchairs or on crutches? Have you arranged for sign language interpreters?
- When event planning, does your club consider holidays such as the Jewish holidays of Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah, the Hindu holiday of Diwali, the Islamic holiday of Eid, or Chinese Lunar New Year?

Tips for making your GSA meetings and events more accessible:

- ★ **GSA participation is not a luxury.** Keep costs and fees at a minimum or ask folks to give what they can, but do not make it a requirement. To help offset costs to the club, you can fundraise and ask for donations from others to provide scholarships or sliding-scale fees.
- ★ **Let's get there together.** Arrange for access to transportation such as setting up carpools or being intentional in selecting venues and times for meeting and events that align with public transit.
- ★ **Consider accessibility.** While your school must follow specific federal and state guidelines regarding accessibility for folks with disabilities, they are not always required to extend that to extracurricular activities and events. Be sure that you are considering all levels of abilities and needs when planning events; partner with a local organization to learn best practices and gain helpful resources.
- ★ **Recognize and honor different cultures.** Identify a list of holidays and traditions not typically observed on a calendar. Use the list to highlight different events and people from a given culture who are part of or have contributed to the LGBTQ+ community. If your GSA ends up scheduling an event on one of these holidays, try to include a tradition such as food or song in your event to honor the culture and the day.
- ★ **Virtual experience.** If your school is hosting an event, consider making it available virtually or recording it so that students or other school community members who are not able to attend in person can still participate, creating access to a larger number of folks who may not have been able to participate based on any of these or other factors.

GENDER DYNAMICS AND -ISMS:

We will provide more information and activities regarding gender identity and expression in the next section, **Understanding and Supporting Gender Identity**. However, since we are working to make our GSA more inclusive and address multiple issues faced by members of our school community, try out the activity “**-Isms**”: **From Identification to Activism** on page 65. Use Sexism as the “-Ism” to identify and explore individual and institutional contributions to sexism in your school.

UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING GENDER IDENTITY

From the moment we are born, society has a system in place to assign a sex to someone based on their visible genitalia. However, people tend to use the term “sex” and “gender” interchangeably, and once a sex has been assigned we presume that the individual’s gender will be the same. While there are a number of folks whose sex and gender align, also known as cisgender, there are many members of our community whose sex and gender do not align. These community members may identify as transgender, intersex, nonbinary, gender fluid, gender-expansive, gender queer, or any other identity that exist within the vast dimension of gender.

Gender doesn’t begin and end with an assignment at birth. There are many aspects that we all have to navigate regardless of how we identify. One aspect is our physical bodies, the experiences we have in them, how society genders our bodies, and how others interact with us based on our bodies. Additionally, our internal identity, gender expression, and gender attribution are other complex aspects of our gender identity that we need to understand and examine. There are a number of helpful tools and resources available to help individuals and your student club gain a deeper understanding of gender identity, explore how gender impacts our daily lives, and access the resources available to students in your school who identify as transgender and gender nonconforming.

Here are some key terms to remember as we move forward:

Assigned Gender (a.k.a. “assigned sex”): When we are born, we are assigned a sex that is then presumed also to be our gender. The assignment is usually based on visible genitalia, and then a gender marker is traditionally recorded on a birth certificate.

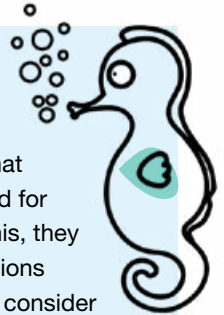
Gender Expression: This is the way we present our gender to the world through our hair, our clothing, our walk, our talk, and more. It is also part of how society and even our family perceive and interact with us based on preconceived expectations of gender expression.

Gender Identity: This is in our heart and mind; this is how we feel on the inside. Gender identity is connected to a person’s innermost core concept of self. This includes ALL gender identities boy/man, girl/woman, a blend of both, neither, and many more. Gender contributes to how each of us perceives our self, how we refer to our self, and often how we interact with others in our life (siblings, parents, educators, etc.). Note that the language a person uses to communicate their gender identity can evolve and change over time, especially as they age and gain access to broader gender terminology.

Gender Attribution: This aspect is closely related to gender expression as it is the process by which society assigns or ascribes a gender onto a person with or without knowing how that person identifies. Outside of transgender and gender nonconforming communities, gender attribution operates with the binary (male or female). Because this assignment is immediate, any confusing cues can result in discomfort or even a violent reaction on the part of the attributer. Gender attribution can be harmful and we want to avoid it. There are many other safe and constructive interactions and conversations we can have around gender identity and expression.

An issue that often arises for folks in the LGBTQ+ community is the confusion or lack of knowledge about the difference between gender identity and sexual orientation. These are two very separate aspects of our identity as one is personal (gender) and the other is interpersonal and based on who we are emotionally, physically, and/or romantically attracted to

TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NONCONFORMING RESOURCES



Gender Spectrum is an organization that works to create a gender-inclusive world for all children and youth. To accomplish this, they help families, organizations, and institutions increase understandings of gender and consider the implications that evolving views have for each of us. www.genderspectrum.org

Trans Youth Equality Foundation is a nonprofit providing education, advocacy, and support for transgender and gender nonconforming children and youth and their families. Their mission is to share information about the unique needs of this community, partnering with families, educators, and service providers to help foster a healthy, caring, and safe environment for all transgender children. www.transyouthequality.org

Trans Student Educational Resources is a youth-led organization dedicated to transforming the educational environment for trans and gender nonconforming students through advocacy and empowerment. www.transstudent.org

TransActive Gender Center provides a holistic range of services and expertise to empower transgender and gender diverse children, youth, and their families in living healthy lives, free of discrimination. bit.ly/TransActive_Gender_Center

(sexual orientation). It is important to make a distinction between these two concepts because when gender and sexual orientation are used interchangeably, incorrect assumptions are often made, it can interfere with an individual's ability to understand and articulate their own identity, and it can interfere with our ability to understand and communicate with each other.

Ending incorrect assumptions, providing a welcoming and affirming school environments, and improving our ability to understand and communicate with each other around the issues faced by transgender and gender nonconforming students is an urgent priority for our schools and the LGBTQ+ community. According to the Movement

Advancement Project and GLSEN, there are approximately over 150,000 transgender youth in about 130,000 schools in the U.S. Additionally, GLSEN's 2015 National School Climate Survey showed that:

- **75%** of transgender students **felt unsafe at school** because of their gender expression
- **70%** of transgender students said they had **avoided bathrooms** because they **felt unsafe or uncomfortable**
- **60%** of transgender students had been **required to use a bathroom or locker room that did not match the gender** they live every day
- **50%** of transgender students were **unable to use the name or pronoun that matched their gender**

Every student has a right to an education without discrimination and bullying, but we have evidence that this is not the experience of our transgender and gender nonconforming peers. Use this information and the resources available to learn more and check out some of the GSA actions below!

Adapted from Gender Spectrum, Understanding Gender; Separation and Stigma: Transgender Youth & School Facilities; and The Body Is Not an Apology, Gender Identity 101: The Definitive Guide to Discussing Gender.

Take Action

Start at home. Start club meetings and events with introductions, inviting each person to share her/his/hir/their name and gender pronouns (GP).

Outside the boxes. When using or creating forms for your club, add a blank line when asking for gender, rather than just having two boxes for female or male. Also, challenge yourselves and your schools to think about why students are asked to identify their gender in school forms: Is it medically necessary information? Is it to track demographics and diversity? If there does not appear to be a good reason to ask the question, request that it be removed!

Keep learning and then educate your community. Put together a presentation or host a panel discussion or movie viewing (pages 44 and 45, and let your school community know what you have learned and what you can do together to make your schools welcoming and affirming for transgender and gender nonconforming students.

Misgendering and Respect for Pronouns Activity. As a group, participants will explore the importance of pronouns and their vital role in self-identification as well as learn ways to combat misgendering and how they can make sure that the gender pronouns of all students are respected. Get started by turning to page 56.

Seeing Beyond Gender. This activity supports our efforts to use gender-nonspecific language while exploring the potential for broader use of gender-nonspecific terminology. Additionally, it addresses our habit of identifying people by gender, either explicitly or by pronoun use. Check it out on page 57.

Exploring Your Own Gender Journey. A reflective exercise for participants located on page 53, this activity can be useful in broadening our understanding of gender by considering and reflecting on our own experiences, beliefs about gender, and the messages we have been taught, both growing up as well as in our day-to-day encounters in school.

DO IT LIKE DRU: LOVE YOUR "SELFIE":

Who you are is not about what others tell you. Rather, it is something you determine for yourself. No one gets to tell another person who they are or how they feel on the inside. Take a snapshot of your self-esteem and check out the activity on page 71 for a tool to help build confidence and self-respect!



See pages 5-6 for information regarding LGBTQ+ student rights and how they specifically apply to transgender and gender nonconforming youth!



CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS OF COMING OUT

Coming out refers to the process that LGBTQ+ people embark on as they work toward embracing their sexual orientation or gender identity and/or sharing that identity openly with other people. Coming out and living openly is not something that is done once or only happens during a specific part of someone's life. The process of coming out is a lifelong journey that has the potential to impact individuals on a daily basis. As LGBTQ+ individuals, we are more than our sexual orientation and our gender identity, we are family members, educators and accountants, lawyers and nurses, janitors and doctors, students and volunteers, and so much more. However, our sexual orientation and our gender identity are a very valuable piece of our whole identity, and we deserve to honor our whole identity.

Everyone's coming out experience is unique to that individual. There is no right or wrong way to come out, and the who, what, where, why, and when is all about the individual who is coming out and may change depending on the situation. It is critical that an individual's coming out experience is their own and done in a manner that is most comfortable for them, not anyone else. The coming out process for one person could be as easy as stating their name or ordering their favorite cup of coffee, and for someone else, it could mean losing their family or the roof over their head. We will talk more in depth about the challenges and benefits of coming out; nevertheless, regardless of the outcome, coming out is a brave decision and action and can allow LGBTQ+ folks to live openly as their authentic self, which can be freeing and empowering.

There are privileges, challenges, and sometimes severe risks for folks when they come out. Whether it is coming out about gender identity or sexual orientation, coming out is a step in a person's process of developing their whole identity. The act or process of coming out not something that heterosexual and cisgender individuals currently have to experience, since their sexual orientation and gender identities are the ones by which all others are measured.

Benefits of coming out that contribute to welcoming and affirming communities:

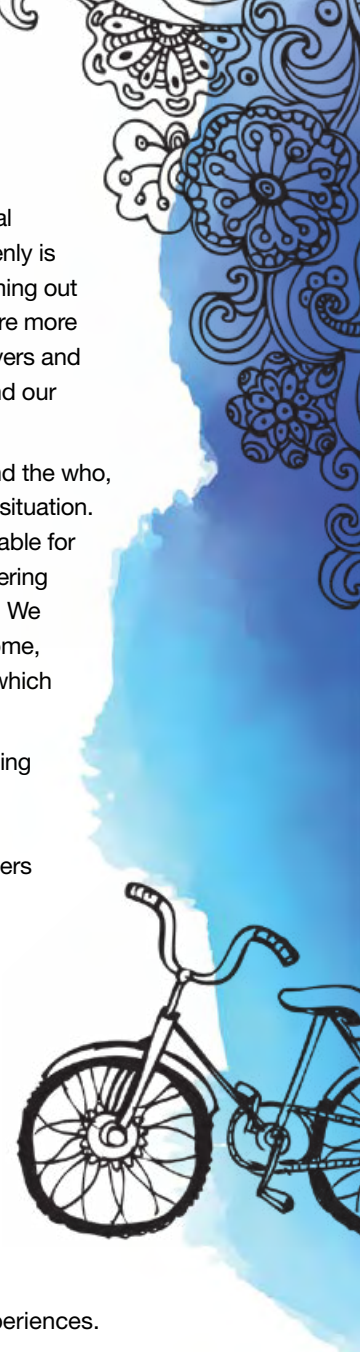
- Ability to be authentic to yourself and live your life honestly.
- Builds self-esteem by providing the opportunity to be honest and centered with oneself.
- Allows you to develop closer, often more genuine relationships with friends and family.
- Coming out can alleviate a lot of stress that is caused by having to hide one's identity.
- Coming out provides the opportunity to connect with others in the LGBTQ+ community.
- Being part of a community with others with whom you have something in common.
- Having the chance to be a role model for others who may be struggling to come out
- Having the opportunity to debunk myths and stereotypes and educate others by sharing your own experiences.

Actual and perceived risks that cause stress, fear, and anxiety for LGBTQ+ people:

- Not everyone will be understanding or accepting of my LGBTQ+ identity.
- Family, friends, or teachers may be shocked, confused, or even aggressive toward me because of my identity.
- Some relationships may be permanently changed; I will lose friends or family members who do not accept my identity.
- I will experience anti-LGBTQ+ bullying, harassment, or discrimination at school or in the community.
- I may be kicked out of my house or lose financial support from my parents or guardian because of my LGBTQ+ identity.

When LGBTQ+ individuals face this level of risk just to be their authentic selves, they can be in a constant state of fear, worry, resistance, or any number of other emotions. Another issue faced regarding coming out is being "outed." Being outed means that someone else discloses an LGBTQ+ individual's identity without their permission. This can be harmful and dangerous and can violate the privacy rights of the individual. What LGBTQ+ individuals need the most, whether they are out to 1 person or 5,000, is support, respect, acceptance, understanding, acknowledgment of their feelings, and a super awesome GSA that will step up and take action.

Check out the information on pages 4 and 6 regarding your rights to privacy and freedom of expression. You and you alone get to decide to whom and when you are out about your identity.



Take Action

Observe National Coming Out Day and find ways to educate your school. Visit Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) website for National Coming Out Day and organize an event or action with your GSA in the month of October at bit.ly/HRC_ComingOut_Day. Any time of the year, you can put together a presentation or host a panel discussion or movie viewing, and let your school community know the risks and rewards of coming out as a member of the LGBTQ+ community and ways to build a welcoming and affirming school community.

Love, Simon: Coming Out & Invisible Identities. Host a viewing of the film *Love, Simon* in your GSA or as a club event and then facilitate this awesome identity-based activity created by GLSEN. Participants will discuss identity characteristics and the idea of invisible identities while learning ways to show support for LGBTQ+ folks who want to be out and visible in their schools but may not yet be comfortable to do so. You can download the activity and get more resources at bit.ly/GLSEN_Love_Simon

Coming Out Story: This activity gives participants an opportunity to walk through a possible coming out experience of an LGBTQ+ person to better understand that it can hold social and legal consequences. Check out the step-by-step information on page 49.

DO IT LIKE DRU: PREPARED TO SUPPORT

As a mental health counselor, Drew dedicated his life to helping others and making sure they had the tools, resources, and support they needed to get through some of life's biggest challenges. Make sure your GSA has resources available or knows where to send folks for additional support.



Coming Out Handout. This colorful handout from The Safe Zone Project is intended to help folks gain a better understanding of the coming out process and some best practices (dos and don'ts) in supporting someone's coming out process. Find it on page 51.

Coming Out as You. The Trevor Project's Coming Out as You guide can help you through your own coming out process. Inside you will find questions that many young people think about and blank spaces to brainstorm how you might answer them. bit.ly/TTP_ComingOutAsYou

Our Children. This is a publication from PFLAG that provides questions and answers for families of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender-expansive, and queer youth and adults and focuses on providing support for parents, caregivers, families, and friends of people who are LGBTQ, with an emphasis on sexual orientation and gender expression. bit.ly/PFLAG_OurChildren

Equality Florida: www.eqfl.org

Zebra Coalition: www.zebrayouth.org

Florida Association of Community Health Centers:
www.fachc.org/lgbt

Centerlink: <https://www.lgbtcenters.org/>



BUILDING OUR ALLIANCES AND OUR SKILLS AS ALLIES

LGBTQ+ student clubs are based on the concept of building alliances and using those alliances and spaces to support each other, create a platform to fight for racial, gender, LGBTQ+, economic, and social justice, and to create welcoming and affirming school communities for all students (*GSA Network, 2018*). These clubs are popularly known as Gay-Straight Alliances, though club names are evolving to be more inclusive of all members' identities (genders and sexualities alliances, PRIDE Club, Queer Student Alliance, etc.) These student clubs are based on alliances, both internally and externally, and members of this type of alliance are called allies. In this section we will be reviewing information for building alliances outside of your club as well as working to develop the allyship skills of the members of your club and school community. Additionally, we have included some helpful resources for starting, improving, and expanding your student club to make sure you have the tools you need to build welcoming and affirming school environments for all students.

When individuals or groups are oppressed, treated as less than, or not protected, that means there is a group they are compared to or that is protected over the oppressed group. These protected groups have been socially deemed to be the "dominant" group or the majority. Such comparisons include LGB individuals to heterosexual individuals and transgender folks to cisgender folks. The idea is that the marginalized group, the one experiencing harassment and oppression, is then measured against the "dominant" group. The group that is deemed dominant by society automatically receives privileges;

these are called unearned privileges. An example of this would be when lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals did not have the right to marry their same-sex partners until a Supreme Court decision in 2015 or when differently abled individuals cannot access a building or particular resources only made accessible to nondisabled folks. Individuals and groups who hold these privileges, or the “dominant” group, have power and can play a vital role in educating, supporting, advocating, and holding others accountable for addressing injustice and oppression. With the leadership and guidance of the groups impacted by injustice and oppression, it is an ally’s responsibility to take action to educate themselves, speak up, step back, and create change. This expectation goes for straight allies to the LGBTQ+ community, white allies to communities of color, cisgender allies to the transgender community, and so on.

Anyone can be an ally! Be that as it may, being an ally is hard work. An ally recognizes that, not being a member of a marginalized group, even if they support them and fight against their oppression, they still belong to a group that holds privilege and power and have to make a continual effort to understand the struggle. For example, an ally to folks with physical disabilities would work to understand better the institutional and interpersonal barriers faced by those with physical limitations. Simultaneous to educating themselves, an ally would also recognize that they have privileges in being physically nondisabled. The ally may not have to worry about or consider access to buildings (parking, entry, stairs, bathrooms, etc.). This reality automatically gives the ally unearned power and privilege by providing access to certain places and situations that are not afforded to people who have physical limitations.

Allyship is often defined as the role or status of being an ally and is a lifelong commitment to a process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people. The work of an ally must be recognized by the people they are aiming to build an alliance with. For example, if our GSA seeks to be an ally to transgender and gender nonconforming students, but cisgender individuals hold all membership and/or leadership positions, then we may not be able to meet our responsibilities as allies. If this is something your club is facing, check out page 26 for some helpful resources on making your student club more inclusive and welcoming for transgender students.

DO IT LIKE DRU: PROMOTING UNITY & INCLUSION

When Drew started the GSA at Seminole High School in 2001, he advertised the meetings by posting this list of *10 Ways Homophobia Affects Straight People*. Your GSA can use this list or brainstorm your own list of ways that homophobia affects straight people, transphobia affects cisgender folks, racism impacts white people, sexism affects male-identified folks, and anti-LGBTQ+ bullying affects non-LGBTQ+ people.

Adapted from Teaching Tolerance, edited by Warren J. Blumenfeld, Boston: Beacon Press: 1992.



Join the Gay-Straight Alliance at Seminole High!

Monday 3:30 pm

1. Homophobia forces us to act “macho” if we are a man or “feminine” if we are a woman. This limits our individuality and self-expression.
2. Homophobia puts pressure on straight people to act aggressively and angrily toward LGBTQ+ people.
3. Homophobia makes it hard to be close friends with someone of the same sex.
4. Homophobia often strains family and community relationships.
5. Homophobia causes youth to become sexually active before they are ready to prove they are “normal.” This can lead to an increase in unwanted pregnancies and STIs.
6. Homophobia prevents vital information on sex and sexuality to be taught in schools. Without this information, youth are putting themselves at a greater risk for HIV and other STIs.
7. Homophobia can be used to hurt a straight person if they “appear to be gay.”
8. Homophobia makes it hard for straight people and LGBTQ+ people to be friends.
9. Homophobia, along with racism, sexism, classism, etc., makes it hard to put an end to AIDS.
10. Homophobia makes it hard to appreciate true diversity and the unique traits that are not mainstream or “normal.”

Allies too are impacted by systems of oppression, and there is much to learn as well as unlearn when it comes to biases, stereotypes, and prejudices. It can be scary to stand up for others, especially if we do not feel entirely knowledgeable or prepared, and we can be nervous about making mistakes or saying the wrong thing. This feeling is ok; mistakes are expected, and we should all support each other through learning experiences and moving forward. As allies, we must be able to own our mistakes. When we are proactive in our own education and supportive of each other, we create an ally support system that is crucial as this work takes time and we need to take care of ourselves and our community. We can do this in our GSAs whether we are just getting them started or have been involved in them for years. The following activities include ways to explore and expand our allyship and some general resources for starting, building, and sustaining successful LGBTQ+ alliances.

Take Action

This section includes two sets of resources that are intended to build off each other. The first set of tools and resources is meant to provide your student club a solid foundation for success, and this includes outlining basics of starting, building, and sustaining an effective LGBTQ+ student club. As your club is working on developing leadership structures, recruiting members, planning activities, and engaging in allyship, it is important to stay centered in our mission to be inclusive of the entire LGBTQ+ community. Utilizing the included allyship-based activities simultaneous to foundational work in a student club allows us to grow our networks of allies while sticking to our commitment to making our school communities more welcoming and affirming for all members of the LGBTQ+ community.

FOUNDATIONAL TOOLS

Whether your GSA has a social, educational, or activism focus, there are some fundamental items to establish when it first starts, and it is a best practice to review and adjust as needed throughout the school year.

Building a Foundation:

- **Establish and be familiar with your club's purpose:** What goals does your club have, and what are your values? Write a mission statement.
- **Prepare for your meetings:** Set an agenda and effectively advertise dates and location.
- **Run a productive meeting:** Set group agreements and a decision-making process, designate facilitator(s), and take notes at each meeting.
- **Create an action plan:** Hold brainstorming meetings, create committees, set deadlines, and keep in touch. Check out the worksheet on page 43 to help you get organized

Adapted from GSA Network, 2017 Resource Packet.

Effective and Inclusive Leadership:

- **Challenging the Process:** Leaders treat their mistakes as learning opportunities and stay prepared to meet any challenge.
- **Recognizing and Addressing Biases:** Leadership means acknowledging that implicit and explicit biases exist and setting the framework for learning about and addressing them within the student club. Check out the **Microaggressions Activity** on page 58.
- **Enabling Others to Act:** Leaders foster collaboration and build spirited teams. They strengthen others, making each person feel capable and powerful.
- **Inspiring a Shared Vision:** Leaders envision a better future. They inspire the team to see exciting possibilities for the future and enlist others in a shared vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes, and dreams.
- **Encouraging the Heart:** Leaders recognize contributions that individuals make and celebrate accomplishments.
- **Fostering Inclusion:** Leaders know the importance of recognizing the unique and diverse identities that exist within the LGTBQ+ community and ensure that the student club's efforts are genuinely welcoming and affirming for all members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Adapted from GLSEN, How to Be an Effective Leader.



Ways to raise awareness about the LGBTQ+ community and your student club:

There are several ways to build understanding and respect toward LGBTQ+ students in your school as well as raise awareness about the issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community at large. Whether you have just started your student club, you are looking to boost attendance, or you want to raise awareness about the experiences of queer and transgender people of color, these activities, at any scale, can help you do all the above and so much more.

- **Hang Posters:** Use catchy slogans, cool art, and colorful graphics. Never underestimate the importance of visibility for your meetings and events!
- **School Newspaper and Social Media:** An editorial, letter to the editor, or ad in the school paper can be a great way advertise your club meetings. You can also write an article on LGBTQ+, or create a blog, a website, or a zine about LGBTQ+ issues. Be creative and have fun.
- **Get Personal:** One of the simplest ways to get folks to come to a meeting or event is to ask them yourself. Tell the person why they should come, and how important their contribution would be. Make it a theme for your GSA meeting, where every club member brings a friend to the meeting.
- **Get Out:** Set up a table at school events, during national LGBTQ+ observance days, or even at lunch. This is a great way to give out information about your club. Some schools have a club fair where you can set up an information table.
- **Follow Up:** At meetings and tabling opportunities, be sure to have sign-in sheets and collect information about who folks are and how you can contact them (email, phone, social media) about upcoming meetings and events. NOTE: Be sure to ask for safe places to contact them, as not everyone is able to be open about their membership in or support for the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Coalition Building:** Collaborate with other student clubs to plan a shared meeting or event and invite each other's members and friends. This is a great way to build connections with other alliances, clubs, and individual students.
- **Host an Event**

- Organize a book club within your GSA, with other student clubs, or within the school's library. Plan the meetings, select books by LGBTQ+ authors, or start a campaign to get your school library to carry that book or an entire LGBTQ+ section.
- Host a movie viewing or panel discussion related to LGBTQ+ issues. Use the guides on pages 44 and 45 for a step-by-step guide on how to put together a successful event.
- Use important days of observance, people, and dates from LGBTQ+ history to raise awareness about the existence and struggles of the LGBTQ+ community. You can use this for posters, articles, tabling or event planning, or coalition building. The timeline on pages 13-17 is a great place to get some ideas. Additionally, here is a list of a few national days or months of observance to get you started:

February: Black History Month

April: Day of Silence

May: Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month

June: LGBTQ+ Pride Month and Pulse Remembrance

September-October: Latinx, Chicano, Hispanic Heritage Month

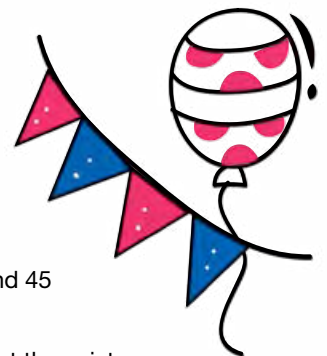
October: LGBTQ+ History Month, National Coming Out Day, and Spirit Day

November: Native American Heritage Month, and Transgender Day of Awareness/Remembrance

December: World AIDS Day



Your school cannot deny your GSA access to bulletin boards, announcements, or other privileges that are given to any other extracurricular club. If a school fails to provide your GSA with the same privileges or treats your club in any way that discriminates against it, it may be violating any number of laws and policies protecting your club and individual LGBTQ+ students. Check out the KYR information on pages 6-7.



If you want specific details as to how to do any of the steps listed above, there are a number of activities on the following page in addition to the wonderfully helpful resources available from the National GSA Network, www.gsanetwork.org/resources, and GLSEN Jump-Start Guides, www.glsen.org/jumpstart.

ALLYSHIP ACTIVITIES:

As you work to either start, build, or grow your GSA, these allyship-based tips, tricks, and activities will not only contribute to the development of your student club, they will strengthen your skills and ability to truly be allies to all members of the LGBTQ+ community and your school.

Here is a handy list of tips and tricks that can be helpful in the realm of allyship. Feel free to use it as is or make it your own—add them to your **Group Agreements**.

- We are here to be allies, and that applies to a very long list of communities
- Be a good listener
- Be aware of your privileges and implicit biases
- Do your own research and learn more about the social, historical, and political context of the community or issue you would like to serve as an ally to
- Do inner work to figure out how we each participate in systems of oppression
- Do the work it takes to change the oppressive systems
- Do what it takes to amplify the voices of those who do not have your privilege (online and in person)
- Teach yourself and answer your questions; do not expect to be taught or shown by those who experience oppression
- Remember that one form of oppression is not more important or more painful than the other; there is no hierarchy of oppression
- Remember that as allies we do not know best, what we do best is follow the lead of those we are allies to
- Never take credit for the work and creativity of those who are oppressed or those who did the work before you
- Never assume that every member of a marginalized group feels oppressed

Here are some questions we should ask ourselves and our club membership on a regular basis to make sure our focus and efforts are aligned with our mission to be inclusive allies:

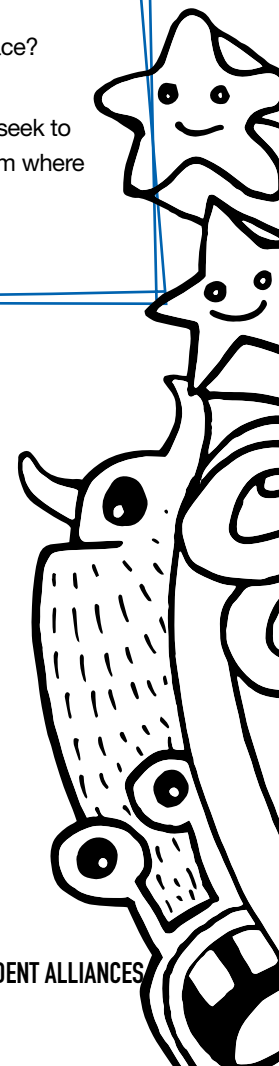
- How much space are we taking up in conversations? In meetings? In the physical room? In organizing/ planning events?
- How do we actively improve access to our meetings? Our actions/events?
- How are our individual identities taking up space? Physically? Verbally?
- How much do we know about the people we seek to work with? What are our assumptions and from where did they originate?
- Who are we leaving behind?

*Adapted from guidetoallyship.com; and *what is allyship? why can't i be an ally?* by PeerNetBC.*

Coming Out as an Ally. This resource from HRC and PFLAG was built to be a “welcome guide” for supporters to build bridges of understanding when someone they know comes out to them as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer. The guide answers initial questions and shares facts, strategies, and ways to show your support as an ally in the fight for LGBTQ+ equality. bit.ly/HRC_PFLAG_SupporterGuide

Steps to Being an Effective Ally Worksheet on page 63 is an activity that helps participants examine the responsibility and integrity that comes with being an ally and helps allies become better prepared to speak up and act against injustice.

Facilitate and Ally 101 workshop. This workshop is a great way to educate and encourage your school community to act as allies to LGBTQ+ students in your school. GLSEN put together this helpful guide to facilitate your own workshop that will have participants thinking critically about where they stand as allies and how they can become better allies to LGBT people. bit.ly/GLSEN_Ally_101



BOOTS & SANDALS: HOW TO HANDLE MISTAKES

This chart can help allies understand that while mistakes are to be expected, the way we respond to our mistakes speaks to how our skills as allies and our allied relationships will either develop or deteriorate. If you have experienced some resistance or tension in your club or school when it comes to addressing microaggressions or other issues related to allies making mistakes, this may be a great resource to share.

Imagine your privilege is a heavy boot that keeps you from feeling when you have stepped on someone's feet or when they have stepped on yours. Now imagine that members of oppressed groups only have sandals on. If you stepped on someone's toe who had sandals on and that person in sandals said "Ouch! You're stepping on my toes!" how do you react?

Because we can often think more clearly about stepping on someone's literal toes than we can when talking about our intentions as allies or have our mistakes brought to our attention, we can more easily see the issues with common reactions to mistakes:

Centering yourself: "I can't believe you think I'm a toe-stepper! I'm a good person!"

Denial that others' experiences are different from your own: "I don't mind when people step on my toes."

Derailing: "Some people don't even have toes, why aren't we talking about them instead?"

Refusal to center the impacted: "All toes matter!"

Tone policing: "I'd move my foot if you'd ask me more nicely."

Denial that the problem is fixable: "Toes getting stepped on is a fact of life.
You'll be better off when you accept that."

Victim blaming: "You shouldn't have been walking around people with boots!"

Withdrawing: "I thought you wanted my help, but I guess not. I'll just go home."



We are often aware of supportive ways to respond to people who are hurt or in need. We can directly apply that awareness to the way we react when we step on someone's toes (make a mistake as allies):

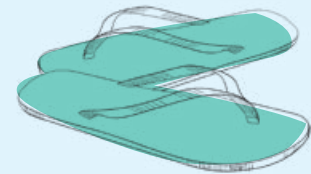
Center the impacted: "Are you okay?"

Listen to their response and learn.

Apologize for the impact, even though you didn't intend it: "I'm sorry!"

Stop the instance: Move your foot.

Stop the pattern: Be aware and careful where you step in the future.



Reacting in a fair and helpful way isn't about learning arbitrary rules, being a doormat, or being "politically correct," it's just the reasonable and respectful thing to do. It can be hard to remember these reactions in the moment, particularly because these issues are so emotionally charged in our society. It may be helpful to reframe the situation so that we don't feel defensive:

Be grateful for and open to the opportunity to learn rather than embarrassed that you made a mistake (make this a foundation of your student club)

Being able to let go of our egos is an incredibly important and powerful skill to develop

Pause and reflect; try saying, "Thanks for letting me know," and take some time to think about the situation and educate yourself

It is not about changing the other person's frame of mind, and they're allowed to be upset about being oppressed

See tips for writing awesome discussion questions on page 36 to add your own discussion questions.

Adapted from guidetoallyship.com, submitted by @presleyp, based on tweet from @RE_invent_ED.

ENDING ANTI-LGBTQ+ BULLYING AND HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS

Schools can be hostile environments for a high number of students who identify or are perceived as LGBTQ+. Their experiences often include anti-LGBTQ+ remarks, bullying, and discrimination. We have reviewed some of these examples throughout this guide, and we are sure your club members can add to the list as well. The outcome of these experiences for students causes even higher concern. According to GLSEN’s 2015 National School Climate Survey, students who experience these levels of harassment and discrimination also avoid school activities, miss more school, have lower grade point averages, are more likely to be disciplined in school, have lower levels of self-esteem, have less of a sense of belonging to the school community, and experience higher levels of depression.

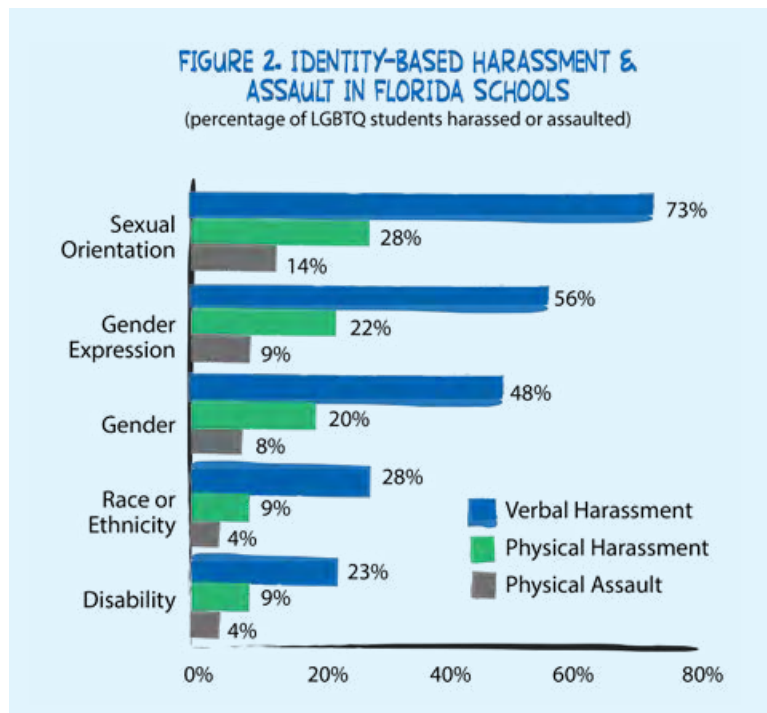
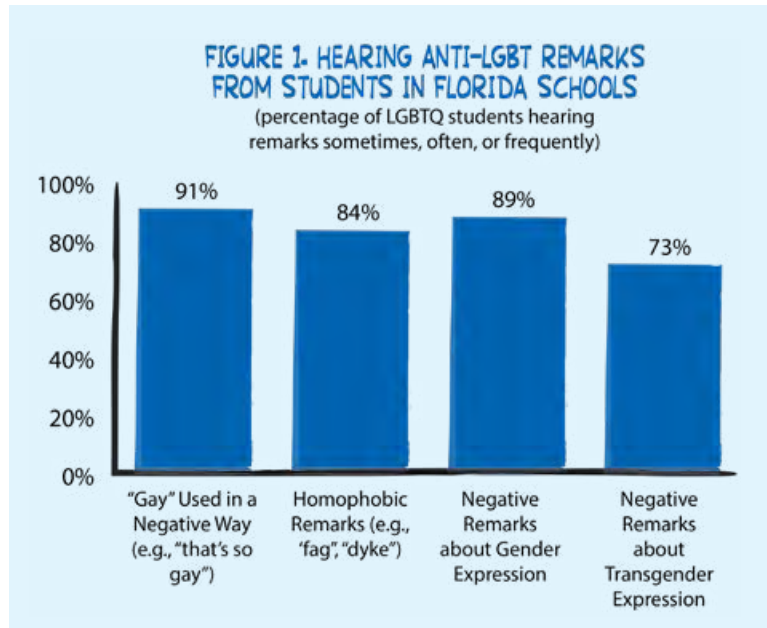
School communities can take direct actions to address these issues. Many of these actions we have covered in this guide, such as having LGBTQ+ student clubs that are designed to build welcoming and affirming school climates. Other measures include increasing access to and the inclusion of LGBTQ+ inclusive curricula, library, and internet resources, professional development for school staff, and comprehensive school policies and practices that protect and do not discriminate against LGBTQ+ students and staff.

The 2015 GLSEN State Snapshot for School Climate in Florida showed that schools were not safe for most LGBTQ+ students in Florida secondary schools and that many students did not have access to GSAs and were also not protected by comprehensive school policies. Nine out of 10 LGBTQ+ students in Florida reported regularly hearing anti-LGBTQ+ remarks from peers and also regularly heard school staff make homophobic remarks (23%) and negative remarks about someone’s gender expression (35%). Additionally, most LGBTQ+ students in Florida reported experiencing harassment or assault at school based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

GLSEN. (2017). *School Climate in Florida (State Snapshot)*. New York: GLSEN.

Take Action

A lot of the information provided above, though we may be familiar with it, can be a hard reality to face. The good news is, much of this guide, up to this point, has already provided you with a lot of tools and resources that you can use to address these issues TODAY! Anything that you don’t find in this guide is available through the links provided, or it is just waiting for your club to come up with an idea and action plan yourself. You can do your own research, edit an activity to fit an issue that you are



trying to address, do additional work through building coalitions, and so much more. There is no limit to the work your GSA can do, and if someone tries to tell you there is, don't forget to go back to the **Know Your Rights** section on page 3.

Did you know that according to GLSEN's 2015 School Climate Survey, students that had a GSA in their school:

- Were less likely to hear "gay" used negatively often or frequently
- Were less likely to hear homophobic remarks such as "fag" or "dyke" often or frequently
- Were less likely to hear negative remarks about gender expression and transgender people
- Were more likely to report that school personnel intervened when hearing homophobic remarks
- Were less likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation than those without a GSA
- Experienced lower levels of victimization related to their sexual orientation and gender expression
- Reported a higher number of supportive school staff and more accepting peers
- Felt more connected to their school community than students without a GSA

That is powerful stuff right there, and that comes from the strength, support, energy, love, and willingness to grow as allies that are at the heart of LGBTQ+ student clubs. As we recommit ourselves to be more inclusive, to do better as allies ourselves, and to know and stand up for our rights, there will be no stopping us!

We will give you a few additional actions for your GSA related explicitly to addressing bullying, but we also want to make sure that you have a few resources to take care of yourself and your club membership. While GSAs can be fun, social, educational, and exciting, it can also be a lot of work. As activists, allies, educators, students, parents, siblings, employees, friends, and so much more, it is crucial that we invest time and energy in self-care. This section provides additional information about self-care and activities to promote awareness and prioritization of wellness.

SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

We should always intervene when we hear anti-LGBTQ+ language, racist language, stereotyping, or jokes at school. You can also do things like creating a bulletin board to display at school about what allies can do to support LGBTQ+ youth and how to address bullying. Find out what kind of LGBTQ+-inclusive resources are available at your school and work with your club and community organizations to bring more resources to your school! When peers and especially adults respond to bullying behavior, name-calling, harassment, physical harassment, etc., a clear message is sent that the behavior is unacceptable, and below are some steps you can take and some safety items to remember to help you interrupt bullying:

- Intervene right away; it is always ok to get someone else to help you intervene
- Separate the folks involved, and ask the person being bullied if you can talk to them on the other side of the room
- Make sure everyone is safe in the situation
- Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs; know what resources are available or find someone nearby who can help
- Do your best to stay calm and practice self-care while intervening
- Model respectful behavior when you intervene, even if it is hard to do

There are some things we want to make sure we avoid when we witness bullying:

- Don't ignore it and don't assume the people involved will figure it out on their own
- Don't worry about trying to sort out the facts, just intervene and/or interrupt
- Don't force other folks to say what they saw in front of others; let the adults handle that
- Don't question the people involved; you are simply there to interrupt and support
- Get police or adult help immediately if there are weapons involved, there are threats of physical or sexual violence, or there is already serious bodily harm.

Adapted from stopbullying.gov.



A Bullying Quiz: In this activity from Teaching Tolerance, participants take a quiz related to bullying and discuss follow-up reflective questions to help them plan an anti-bullying initiative in their community. Find all the information and resources you need on page 61.

Microaggression Activity: This activity on pages 58-60 provides participants the opportunity to recognize how different audiences can interpret language and how microaggressions occur. Every day

we experience and witness countless direct and indirect forms of bias and discrimination. This can qualify as a type of harassment, and microaggressions have become commonplace in American vocabulary and discourse, such as “don’t be a sissy” or “that’s gay.” Use this activity to build an understanding of the words we use and how to be intentional in what we say. This activity also builds on our inclusivity and allyship skills.

DO IT LIKE DRU: HEALTH THROUGH SELF-CARE

Drew truly understood the value of self-care—the need to find balance and ways to take care of ourselves while we do this type of work. Try making a Self-Care Plan using the Worksheet on page 69 as an important part of staying healthy and promoting mental wellness among your GSA members.



DO IT LIKE DRU: TOOLS FOR ENGAGING YOUR GSA AND TAKING ACTION

HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR WRITING AWESOME DISCUSSION QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU ALONG:

DYNAMITE DISCUSSION DESIGN:

- **Analysis:** “How would you explain...” “What is the importance of...” “What is the meaning of”
- **Compare and Contrast:** “Compare...” “Contrast...” “What is the difference between...” “What is the similarity between...”
- **Cause and Effect:** “What are the causes/results of...” “What connection is there between...”
- **Clarification:** “What is meant by...” “Explain how...”

DIALOGUING DUDS THAT DON’T DAZZLE:

- **Simple Yes/No:** Little discussion and promotes guessing.
- **Elliptical:** Too vague; it is not clear what is being asked.
- **Leading:** Conveys the expected answer.
- **Slanted:** Closes down participants who may not agree with the implied assumption.

Adapted from Stanford Teaching Commons, Designing Effective Discussion Questions.

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS:

When facilitating an activity or an event, there are a few items to note to help ensure our ducks are in a row and we are set up for success:

Planning: Identify what the needs are for any given event or activity. Assign roles and tasks, and plan check-in meetings before the event. It is smart to schedule and advertise for an event at least 4 to 6 weeks in advance to give everyone time to plan and recruit attendees. Check out the worksheet on page 43 to help you get organized.

Venue: Is the area accessible (physically, transportation, cost, parking, etc.)? Has it been properly reserved? Is there enough room (too much, too little)? Are their gender-neutral restrooms available? Is the space identified for attendees (signs, greeters/guides, etc.)?

Materials: Are all the needed materials available (pens, paper, worksheets, movie, panelists, etc.)? Is all the right equipment accessible and reserved? Do participants need to be asked to bring anything (water bottles, food, donations, supplies, etc.)? Were discussion questions prepared? (See the tips for writing awesome discussion questions on the previous page.)
Has a moderator or facilitator been identified? Are the Group Agreements readily available?

Day Of: Be sure the activity or event is set up and ready to go before the start time (venue, materials, etc.). Introduce any activities and briefly familiarize participants with the subject by giving them key points and stating your objective in hosting this activity, event, panel, movie, etc.

Wrap Up: After a successful event, thank your attendees and anyone who helped put the event together. Have someone take notes or find a way to take feedback from attendees. Encourage others to share their experiences with you and let them know how they can get involved in your student club. Share pictures and write-ups in the school news media about how the event went.



WHEN YOU SEE THESE STICKERS:

Consider hosting the event online to make the event more accessible and/or inviting community members to expand your reach.



It is recommended that you either review your existing group agreements or reserve time to create some before proceeding with the activity to promote a productive, welcoming, and affirming environment.



While most of these activities have discussion questions included, there is always room to come up with your own questions, and you are encouraged to do so. See page 36 for pointers.



DEFINITIONS/VOCABULARY

ABLEISM: A system of oppression that benefits non-disabled people at the expense of folks with disabilities.

ADVOCATE: A person who actively works to end intolerance, educate others, and support social equity for a marginalized group; or to actively support/plea in favor of a cause.

AGENDER: A person who sees themselves as not having a gender or as being gender neutral.

ALLY: This term describes an individual who engages in ongoing processes to (1) understand their own privilege and its impact, (2) listen to and learn from those who are most affected by forms of oppressions, (3) work in solidarity with those most affected by injustice, and (4) foster climates of respect, appreciation, and equity.

ANDROGYNOUS: Used both as a self-description and a means to describe an outward appearance, mannerisms, expressions, and/or identifications that combine masculine and feminine traits in a way that produces an ambiguity.

ASEXUAL: A person who does not experience sexual attraction and/or has a lack of interest in sex. There is considerable diversity among the asexual community, as each asexual person experiences relationships, attraction, and intimacy differently.

ASSIGNED GENDER/SEX: The assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex assigned at birth often based on physical anatomy at birth and/or karyotyping. It is often assumed that assigned sex will equate with an individual's gender.

BIPHOBIA: The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of bisexuals. Biphobia can be seen within the LGBTQ+ community, as well as in mainstream society, and is characterized by the belief that people can only be heterosexual or homosexual.

BISEXUAL: A person emotionally, physically, and/or romantically attracted to more than one gender/sex. This attraction does not have to be equally

split or indicate a level of interest that is the same across the genders or sexes an individual may be attracted to.

BUTCH: A person who identifies as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally, or emotionally. The term is sometimes used as derogatory slang for lesbians but can also be claimed as an affirmative identity label.

CISGENDER: Refers to individuals whose gender identity aligns with the gender/sex they were assigned at birth; cis-from Latin, meaning, "on this side [of]." In contrast to trans, from the Latin root meaning "across," "beyond," or "on the opposite side [of]."

CISSEXISM: Beliefs, behaviors, and practices that privilege cisgender people over transgender and gender-nonconforming people. Rooted in the belief that transgender people are in some way inferior or abnormal; as such, it results in systems that marginalize and oppress transgender and gender-nonconforming people.

CLASSISM: A system of oppression that benefits people with high and middle socioeconomic status at the expense of people with lower socioeconomic status.

CLOSETED: An individual who is not open to themselves or others about their sexuality or gender identity. This may be by choice and/or for other reasons such as fear for their own safety, peer or family rejection or disapproval, and/or loss of housing, job, etc.

COMING OUT: The process by which one accepts and/or comes to identify one's own sexuality or gender identity (to "come out" to oneself), and/or the process by which one shares one's sexuality or gender identity with others (to "come out" to friends, etc.).

CROSS-DRESSING: The act of dressing and presenting as a different gender. One who considers this an integral part of their identity may identify as a cross-dresser. "Transvestite" is often considered a pejorative term with the same meaning.

DISCRIMINATION: Unequal treatment

of people based on their membership in a group. In contrast to prejudice, discrimination is a behavior. To discriminate is to treat a person not on the basis of their intrinsic individual qualities, but on the basis of a prejudgment about a group.

DOWN LOW: Typically referring to men who identify as straight but who secretly have sex with men. Down low (or DL) originated in and is most commonly used by communities of color.

DRAG: Describes the act or performance of wearing clothing associated with one gender by an individual who identifies as another gender, often with exaggerated characteristics.

DYKE: Refers to a masculine-presenting lesbian. While often used derogatorily, it can be and is adopted affirmatively by many lesbians (and not necessarily masculine ones) as a positive self-identity term.

FAG(GOT): Derogatory term referring to a gay person, or someone perceived as queer. Occasionally used as a self-identifying affirming term by some gay men, at times in the shortened form "fag."

FEMME: An identity or presentation that leans toward femininity. Although commonly associated with feminine lesbian/queer women, it's used by many to describe a distinct gender identity and/or expression, and does not necessarily imply that one also identifies as a woman or not.

GAY: Individuals who are primarily emotionally, physically, and/or romantically attracted to members of the same sex and/or gender. More commonly used when referring to males/men-identified individuals who are attracted to males/men-identified individuals, but can be applied to females/women-identified individuals as well.

GENDER ATTRIBUTION: The process by which a society assigns or ascribes a gender onto a person with or without (usually without) knowing how that person identifies.

GENDER BINARY: A social system in which people are classified into one of two categories: male or female. This system is premised on the idea that intersex and transgender people do not exist or that they need to be fixed to fit into the binary system.

GENDER-EXPANSIVE: An umbrella term used for individuals who broaden commonly held definitions of gender. Gender-expansive individuals can include those with transgender and nonbinary identities, as well as those whose gender in some way is seen to be stretching society's notions of gender.

GENDER EXPRESSION: The way individuals present their gender in the world and how society, culture, community, and family perceive, interact with, and try to shape their gender. Gender expression is also related to gender roles and how society uses those roles to try to enforce conformity to current gender norms. (See *Gender Binary*.)

GENDER FLUID: People who have a gender or genders that change. Gender-fluid people move between genders, experiencing their gender as something dynamic and changing, rather than static.

GENDER IDENTITY: A person's innermost core concept of self, which can include boy/man, girl/woman, a blend of both, neither, and many more. Gender identity is how each person perceives themselves and what they call themselves, which can be consistent with, or different than, their gender/sex assigned at birth.

GENDER NONCONFORMING (NONBINARY): A term used to describe people who do not conform to the social gender binary system of gender (male and female). This term can be seen as negative as it implies that the goal of gender is to conform.

GENDERQUEER: A gender identity label often used by people who do not identify with the gender binary, or as an umbrella term for many gender-nonconforming or nonbinary identities.

HETERONORMATIVE: The assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that

heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities. Leads to invisibility and stigmatizing of other sexualities. Often included is a level of gender normativity and gender roles, the assumption that individuals should identify as men and women, and be masculine men and feminine women, and finally that men and women are a complementary pair.

HETEROSEXISM: Beliefs, behaviors, and practices that grant preferential treatment to heterosexual people. Heterosexism is rooted in the belief that homosexual people are in some way inferior or abnormal; as such, it results in systems that marginalize and oppress LGBTQ+ people.

HETEROSEXUAL: A person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or romantically attracted to members of the opposite sex. Also known as straight.

HOMOPHOBIA: An umbrella term for a range of negative attitudes (e.g., fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, erasure, or discomfort) that one may have toward members of the LGBTQ+ community. The term can also connote a fear, disgust, or dislike of being perceived as LGBTQ+. The term is extended to bisexual and transgender people as well; however, the terms biphobia and transphobia are used to emphasize the specific biases against individuals of bisexual and transgender communities.

HOMOSEXUAL: a [medical] term used to describe a person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or romantically attraction attracted to members of the same sex/gender. This term is considered stigmatizing due to its history as a category of mental illness and is discouraged for common use (use gay or lesbian instead).

IDEOLOGICAL OPPRESSION: The belief that one group is somehow better or superior to another. The belief of the dominant group is that they are somehow more intelligent, harder working, stronger, more capable, more deserving, chosen, superior, etc. The dominant group then holds these beliefs about itself and applies opposing qualities to the other group – stupid, lazy, weak, incompetent, worthless, wrong, less deserving, etc.

INSTITUTIONAL OPPRESSION: When the beliefs that one group is better or superior to another become embedded in our social institutions – legal systems, school systems, police practice, hiring policies, housing, media, political power, etc.

INTERNALIZED HOMOPHOBIA: Adoption of degrading societal stereotypes about LGBTQ+ people by LGBTQ+ individuals, causing dislike and resentment of their own sexual or gender identity; it can also cause a disdain for other LGBTQ+ people who do not assimilate into heterosexual gender norms.

INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION: A result of the ideology of inferiority, seeing it reflected in institutions, and experiencing discrimination from members of the dominant group, members of oppressed groups eventually come to believe the negative messages about themselves. (See *Internalized Homophobia*.)

INTERPERSONAL/INTERGROUP OPPRESSION*: Once the belief that one group is superior to another is structured into institutions, it gives permission and reinforcement for individuals of the dominant group to personally disrespect or mistreat individuals who are members of oppressed groups. These are the behaviors that happen in person-to-person, group-to-person, and person-to-group interactions: jokes, bullying, stereotypes, assault, harassment, ignoring, etc.

*Most people in a dominant group have internalized the messages about other groups and believe that their attitudes are justified or even supported because of ideological and institutional oppression.

INTERSEX: Someone whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and genitals differs from the two expected patterns of male or female. (See *Assigned Gender/Sex*.)

LESBIAN: Females/women-identified individuals who are emotionally, physically, and/or romantically attracted to other females/women-identified individuals.

MISGENDERING: The process by which people categorize other people's gender, based on assumptions, without regard to how the other person self-identifies. These misperceptions can cause the misgendered person to feel distress, anxiety, depression, and invisible.

OPPRESSION: The systematic mistreatment of people because of their membership in a group.

OUTING: The involuntary or unwanted disclosure of another person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status. Outing someone can have serious repercussions on employment, economic stability, personal safety, housing, or family situations.

PANSEXUAL: Both a self-description and a means to describe those who identify as having significant emotional, physical, and/or romantic attraction to individuals regardless of their gender identity, though not necessarily equally or simultaneously, and includes transgender and intersex individuals into its scope.

PASSING: A term for transgender individuals being accepted as, or able to "pass for," a member of their self-identified gender/identity (regardless of assigned gender/sex). Additionally, the term is used for LGB/queer individuals who are believed to be or are perceived as being straight.

PREJUDICE: A preconceived opinion of a person or group that is not based on reason or actual experience. In contrast to discrimination, prejudice is an attitude.

PRONOUNS (GENDER PRONOUNS): The pronoun or set of pronouns that a person would like others to call them by, when their proper name is not being used. Examples include "she/her/hers" or "he/him/his," "ze/hir/hirs," "zie/zir/zirs," or "they/them/theirs," and some individuals choose to not use pronouns at all, using only a proper name.

QPOC/QTPOC: Initialisms that stand for queer people of color and queer and/or trans people of color.

QUEER: An umbrella term to describe individuals who don't identify as straight.

Also used to describe people who have non-normative gender identity or as a political affiliation. Due to its historical use as a derogatory term, it is not embraced or used by all members of the LGBTQ+ community. The term queer can often be used interchangeably with LGBTQ+.

QUESTIONING: This term describes people who are curious about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity and do not feel that they fit into any one classification system.

RACISM: A system of oppression that benefits white people at the expense of people of color.

RECLAIMED WORDS: Some individuals and communities choose to identify with terms that had previously been used as slurs against them and reclaim them by giving them a new meaning, often imbued with a sense of pride and resilience. It's important to remember that identity is unique to each individual; not all members of a community readily accept the use of reclaimed words, as they may still find them oppressive and hurtful.

SAME GENDER LOVING (SGL): A term sometimes used by members of the African-American/Black community as a culturally affirming label for sexual orientation.

SEXISM: A system of oppression that benefits male-identified people at the expense of female-identified people.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: The type of emotional, physical, and/or romantic attraction one has the capacity to feel for some others, generally based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to.

STEREOTYPE: To believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same.

TRANSGENDER (TRANS*): A broad umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose gender expression is nonbinary and/or whose gender identity is different from their gender/sex assigned at birth. Transgender individuals may or may not

choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/or medically and must self-identify as transgender in order for the term to be appropriately used to describe them. Sometimes people choose to use trans with an asterisk afterward as a way to make trans a more inclusive identity; others view it as a way to exclude particular trans identities.

TRANSITION(ING): A person's process of developing and assuming a gender expression to match their gender identity. This can include coming out to one's family, friends, and/or co-workers and changing one's name, pronouns, and/or gender marker on legal documents. Some individuals may choose to undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions. It's best not to assume how one transitions, as it is different for everyone.

TRANSPHOBIA: Systemic violence against transgender people, associated with attitudes such as fear, discomfort, distrust, or disdain. This word is used similarly to homophobia, xenophobia, misogyny, etc. Transphobia can be seen within the LGBTQ+ community, as well as in mainstream society.

TWO-SPIRIT: An umbrella term applied to individuals within Native communities who embody one of many traditional mixed-gender roles found among Native American and Canadian First Nation cultures. Two-spirited individuals do not fit neatly into Western transgender categories or the gender binary systems. It is a term of reverence, traditionally referring to people who display both masculine and feminine characteristics who are thought to have higher spiritual powers.

ZE/HIR: Alternative pronouns (gender pronouns) that are gender neutral and preferred by some individuals. Pronounced /zee/ and /here/, they replace "he" and "she" and "his" and "hers," respectively. Alternatively, some people who are not comfortable with/do not embrace he/she use the plural pronoun "they/their" as a gender neutral singular pronoun.

Adapted from resources by Gender Spectrum, GLSEN Safe Space Kit, Human Rights Campaign, It's Pronounced Metrosexual, LGBTQ Student Center at New York University, The Safe Zone Project, and Trans Student Educational Resources.

GROUP AGREEMENTS

PURPOSE: Group agreements are an excellent foundation for club meetings, events, discussions, and so much more. Having group agreements as opposed to rules gives participants ownership of the guidelines and expectations of the group rather than a set of rules to be enforced. The goal of these agreements is to establish a respectful environment that encourages dialogue, allowing space for questions to be asked and trust to be built, and to encourage members to rely on each other as well as hold each other accountable. Group agreements should be one of the first items done in your club and should be referred to throughout the school year and regularly utilized at events hosted by your group.

MATERIALS: Chart paper and markers

ESTIMATED TIME: 20-30 min.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Let the group know that because everyone will be participating in activities and discussions, the group is collaboratively setting up some guidelines that we can all agree to observe
2. Ask the group questions to get the discussion started:
 - A. What do you need to feel welcomed and affirmed in joining or participating in group discussions?
 - B. What are the expectations you have of those engaged in discussions surrounding issues such as gender identity, sexual orientation, race, social class, bullying, harassment, privilege, and discrimination?
 - C. How do we hold each other accountable for honest and dynamic discussions?
3. Once an agreement is suggested, repeat it back to be sure it was heard correctly and then record it on chart paper.
4. Once your group has established a list that they feel is comprehensive, remind everyone that this is a group agreement and that all members of the group will be held responsible for meeting these expectations. This list is also not a closed list, and the group can add to the list or adjust as needed throughout the year.
5. Have someone record the notes electronically. Distribute a completed list and post it in a visible location at each meeting and event.

Here are some sample group agreements that have been successful in creating a respectful climate while promoting accountability:

Don't make assumptions, ask questions: Ask questions or ask someone to explain to make sure we understand their perspective. We do not always know what others are thinking or feeling, and it is best to avoid assumptions.

Step up and step back: If you are someone who has a lot to say, try to “step back” and let others have a chance. If you are usually more reserved or shy, try to “step up” and let folks hear what you have to say.

Think well of each other: Conversations about personal experiences can be difficult to navigate and sometimes result in conversations that may feel uncomfortable or even hurtful for folks. It is important to recognize and value that we are a part of an alliance with the intention of making our schools and communities more inclusive and affirming for all members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Keep it confidential: While doing outreach and education is always important, we have to remember to protect the confidentiality of our members and other students in school, because breaching confidentiality can have severe consequences.

Private and supportive spaces: Working together as a group to be open and honest with each other is helpful and can be done without disclosing others' personal or private information. Our group will also support participants' right to pass, meaning that we will respect an individual's decision to participate or not participate in a discussion (ex: "I'd rather not" or "I don't want to answer").

It's ok to say "ouch": If someone hears a comment that feels oppressive or hurtful, have them say "ouch." Using a word like ouch can be easier than saying "that was transphobic" or "that comment was racist." While the word may have been, being prepared to step in to help with a learning moment helps ensure that participants can move ahead together.

*Language is powerful, and we often hear language that is rooted in racism or other -isms: "illegal/s," "trannies," "coloreds," "those people" or other words that have been used to marginalize and oppress people. These words should not be tolerated in our meetings, events, or our school community, and they need to be interrupted immediately. Some helpful phrases to have in your back pocket are:

- We are trying to create a space that is safe for everyone in our community, and that kind of language is hurtful. Please don't use that term again.
- That language is racist/homophobic and is hurtful. Please use the term _____ instead.
- Just as we don't allow hurtful terms like (fill in a derogatory name used about the LGBTQ+ community) to be used in our organization, we don't want to use that term to refer to people of color either.

Some final key things to remember:

- No one person can speak for an entire community.
- We should always keep an open mind.
- It is important to take risks. Comfort is overrated.
- Inclusion of all LGBTQ+ means ALL people, NO exceptions.

Adapted from Basic Rights Education Fund, Standing Together: Coming Out for Racial Justice Toolkit; Lynn Weber, Understanding Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality: A Conceptual Framework; Girl's Best Friend Foundation and Advocates for Youth, Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth: A Toolkit.

PLANNING AND GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Area of Focus:			Start Date:		
What goal do you want to accomplish in ____ weeks					
Useful Sections/Activities of <i>Do It Like Dru</i> Guide:					
Additional Info & Resources Needed:		Responsibilities			
		Name:		Role:	
Tasks and Plan of Action					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Progress:	Progress:	Progress:	Progress:	Progress:	Progress:
Successes, Challenges, and Lessons Learned:					

MOVIE VIEWING AND DISCUSSION

PURPOSE: Showing a film and facilitating a discussion afterward is a great way to inform people of an issue and to take the work of your student club to the next level. This activity gives participants an opportunity to engage in visual media while partaking in follow-up discussions prevalent to the needs of your school community.

MATERIALS: Location to watch the film, movie, prepared discussion questions

ESTIMATED TIME: Length of film plus 30-45 min. for discussion

DIRECTIONS:

1. The first step will be to select a film.
2. The next step will be to identify and secure a location, schedule the event, and invite participants (flyers, social media, student paper, etc.). You can show the film to your student club or in a class, or open it to the school or the local community.
3. Prepare a list of discussion questions.
 - a. Be sure to view the movie in advance. This gives you the opportunity to gain a firm understanding of the film's messages before facilitating a discussion about it. While previewing the film, take notes on key points, note how you would like to introduce the film, and write down any specific questions or issues you might want to address in the discussion.
4. When the discussion begins, start by asking specific questions about the content of the film, and give viewers a chance to express their feelings. If someone makes a statement, ask if others agree or disagree (feel free to jot down or summarize the answers you are given).
 - a. Here are some questions to get you started. Check out **Setting Up for Success** on page 37 for more tips and guidance on creating effective discussion questions.
 1. What is your overall reaction to the film?
 2. How were you feeling, or what went through your mind, when you saw (insert scene from film)?
 3. What does this mean for us as a student group/school/community?
 4. Where do we see signs of this issue (or its effects) in our own student group/school/community?
 5. How does this issue relate to other issues?
5. After a successful movie viewing event, share pictures and write-ups in the school news media about how the event went. Encourage others to share their experiences with you and let them know how they can get involved in your student club.



PANEL DISCUSSION

PURPOSE: Hosting a panel discussion is another great way to get folks talking about the issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community. A panel discussion allows the participants to hear unique perspectives from each panelist and encourages dialogue among diverse perspectives.

MATERIALS: Room or auditorium to host the panel, proper audio/visual equipment, panel members

ESTIMATED TIME: 45-60 min.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Identify a topic/issue that the panel discussion will be based on. You can merge the movie viewing activity and the panel discussion as well.
2. Choose the size of your panel (a good size is three to five participants), and then identify your panelists and invite them to your event, finding ideal dates that works with everyone's schedule.
 - a. In order to promote a dynamic discussion and event, be sure to invite panelists who represent multiple intersecting identities as well as varying opinions.
3. The next step will be to identify and secure a location, schedule the event, and invite participants (flyers, social media, student paper, etc.). You can host the panel in your student club or in a class, or open it to the school or the local community.
4. Select the moderator(s) for the panel; this can be a student or school staff member who is involved with your student club. This person should:
 - a. Have a good understanding of the topic and should be able to guide the conversation.
 - b. Understand that their role is to introduce the panelists, ask the panelists several questions, and create a smooth transition between questions.
 - c. Be able to moderate any potential disputes among panelists, immediately address any problematic comments from panelists or audience members, keep track of the length of responses, and keep the discussion within the event timeframe.
5. Before the event, write out several questions that you want to ask your panelists. The moderator will ask these questions to get the discussion started. Check **Setting Up for Success** on page 37 for more tips and guidance on creating effective discussion questions.
6. Follow up with and confirm with the panelists that they can and will attend at the scheduled time and location. Send reminders one week and 24 hours before the event and include the time, date, and location, as well as other details about the event such as the other panelists, the event schedule, your expectations of them, and the list of questions they'll be asked.
7. If time allows, allow panelists to take questions from the audience.
8. After a successful panel discussion, share pictures and write-ups in the school news media about how the event went. Encourage others to share their experiences with you and let them know how they can get involved in your student club.



Adapted from iHollaback!.

ABCS FOR UNDERSTANDING LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY

PURPOSE: To have participants gain a clear understanding of the terminology being used in group discussions and activities. This process will help in making sure that group or community members are coming from a similar foundation of knowledge around terminology.

MATERIALS: Small sheets of paper or note cards, pens or markers, list of vocabulary words

ESTIMATED TIME: 30-45 min.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Hand out terms (one or many) to each participant.
2. Ask participants, individually or with a partner, to try to define/explain their term(s).

Facilitator: See Vocabulary on page 38-40 for definitions*

3. After a few minutes of brainstorming, ask participants to share what they decided. The group should discuss or clarify the definition of terms as needed.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION:

1. Were most of the terms/definitions ones that you were already familiar with? Were there any surprises? If so, which ones?
2. Which of these words are ones that you think are often misused?
3. Why do you think it's important to have a clear understanding of terminology?

***Facilitator Note:** The list of terms you hand out can be adjusted accordingly for age and/or subject matter. Whatever the list, it's critical that the facilitator have a solid understanding of the terms so that definitions can be clarified during the sharing and discussion portion of this activity.

Adapted from DiversityWorks.



GIVE 'EM A POP QUIZ TO MAKE 'EM AN LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY WHIZ!

PURPOSE: Put a twist on a traditional pop quiz and host an interactive terminology activity by creating a multiple choice matching quiz. When you facilitate the activity, you can have folks work as individuals, pairs, or groups to match the answers.

MATERIALS: A premade matching quiz with enough copies for participants and an answer key for the facilitator (see example on page 48).

ESTIMATED TIME: 30-45 min.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Distribute quiz to participants and tell them how much time they have to take it (5-10 min. recommended), whether they can work in pairs/groups, and that each definition matches a single term.
2. When all participants are finished, review the answers with the group. Have fun with it!
3. Be sure to further explain any terms that may have stumped participants or that people struggled with. Feel free to discuss the pros and cons of using labels and definitions; review the LGBTQ+ vocabulary section of this guide for more info.
4. Utilize the follow-up discussion questions from **ABCs For Understanding LGBTQ+ Terminology** on page 46 to go even deeper.

Note: Create your own matching quiz using terms from the vocabulary and terminology on pages 38-40 to make your activity fit your needs or topics that need further exploration and understanding in your club or school community.



EXAMPLE: (THIS EXAMPLE FOCUSES ON TERMS RELATED TO SEXUAL ORIENTATION.)

Please match each term to its definition in the corresponding section.

Terms

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. ___ Lesbian | 7. ___ LGBT |
| 2. ___ Bisexual | 8. ___ Homophobia |
| 3. ___ Gay | 9. ___ Biphobia |
| 4. ___ Homosexual | 10. ___ Heterosexism |
| 5. ___ Queer | 11. ___ Heterosexual Privilege |
| 6. ___ Fag/Dyke/etc. | |

Definitions

- A. An abbreviation some people use to refer to lesbians, gay men, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning folks collectively.
- B. The belief that heterosexual relationships and people are ideal and better or more normal than queer relationships and people.
- C. A person whose sexual and romantic feelings may be for people of “either” sex.
- D. Unearned privileges that go to straight people simply because they are straight: e.g., the ability to display affection and talk publicly about spouses or crushes without question.
- E. An inclusive term that refers collectively to lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender folks and others who may not identify with any of these categories but do identify with this term. While once used as a hurtful, oppressive term, many people have reclaimed it as an expression of power and pride.
- F. A man or boy whose primary sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the same sex. While many people use this word only to refer to men, others use it as a general term to include both men and women, e.g. “the ___ community.”
- G. Terms that may be oppressive when used by people outside the community but that some people have chosen to reclaim despite their history of being used in hurtful ways.
- H. The systematic oppression of lesbians and gay men based on their sexuality.
- I. A woman or girl whose primary sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the same sex.
- J. Refers to any person whose sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the same sex. While once widely used, it is generally not preferred as it did not emerge from within the community and was used to describe a mental illness.
- K. The systematic oppression of bisexual people specifically because they are neither gay nor straight

Adapted from Kansas City Anti-Violence Project, Finding a Common Language: A Quiz of Essential Vocabulary for Working with the LGBT Community.

Key

- 1.) I, 2.) C, 3.) F, 4.) J, 5.) E, 6.) G, 7.) A, 8.) H, 9.) K, 10.) B, 11.) D

COMING OUT STORY

PURPOSE: This activity gives participants an opportunity to empathize through a hypothetical person's experience, struggle, and setbacks with the lifelong process that is coming out. The facilitator walks participants through a possible coming out experience of an LGBTQ+ person and then demonstrates that coming out is not a one-time event while highlighting a few of the possible social and legal ramifications that can come along with coming out.

MATERIALS: Scrap paper, writing utensil

ESTIMATED TIME: 20 min.

Note to Facilitator: It's extremely important that you drive home the point that this is one hypothetical individual's experience with coming out. It's not meant to represent every LGBTQ+ person's story, or to say that coming out is this bad for everyone, but to highlight many of the negative social and legal ramifications of coming out, and to make clear that coming out is not a one-time thing. This can be an emotionally charged activity. As a facilitator, you are inviting people to bring up challenging emotions and to use those emotions as a starting place for empathy. Be sure that you have resources available (support/information hotlines, community organizations, or school resources like a counselor).

DIRECTIONS:

On a piece of scratch paper, have participants write down their favorite/most important things in each category: (Explain that this is just for the purpose of the activity and shouldn't cause stress.)



1. Person (friend/loved one)
2. Family Member/Relative (Related or Chosen)
3. Hobby/Passion
4. Material Possession
5. Dream Job

Inform participants that for the remainder of the activity, they are to imagine they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer—and if they identify this way already, ask them to just imagine they are in this specific queer person's shoes.

Facilitator should now read the story asking participants to follow along with their lists.

COMING OUT STORY:

You try to explain that you are really in love with Batman. Then your friend calls you gay and tells you he can't hang out with you anymore. Mark that person off your list.

Fast forward to high school. Your feelings of attraction to people of the same sex haven't gone away, and you've started to explore them secretly in relationships. You think, "It's the 21st century. My family loves me. I should be myself." You decide to tell your parents that you are dating someone, and that you are gay. They tell you that you're going through a phase and force you to either break up with that person or find a new home to live in. You say it's not a phase, it's who you are, and they kick you out. Mark Number 2 off your list.

A little further down the road, you're in college now and life has gotten a little better. You've found a community of people to hang out with who support and care for you. They accept you for who you are. One day, you see a

sign for a student organization meeting for that Number 3 thing on your list. You decide to check it out and go to a meeting. Afterwards, the president comes up to you and introduces herself. You start talking and she asks if she saw you in the gay pride parade on campus recently. You say yes and excitedly describe the event that you were involved with. She tells you that she respects your right to do what you want, but that members of the group wouldn't feel comfortable around you. She asks you not to come back. Mark Number 3 off your list.

After you leave the meeting, you come back to your room to find that "HOMO!" has been written on your door and your dorm room has been broken into. That Number 4 thing has been destroyed. Mark that off your list.

Finally, later in life, you've managed to get your ideal job and life is good. You're at work one day and have a picture of your partner and your child on your desk. Your boss walks by and asks about them. You tell them who they are, and she says great and goes on her way. The next morning, you get called to a meeting where your boss tells you that the company values diversity but that the picture of your family is "forcing others to accept your lifestyle" and that you must take it down. You mention other staff members with family photos on their desk but are told that it is different. You pursue support through human resources because you are sure that your boss cannot do this. Two months later you are pulled into another meeting with your boss and they tell you that the company is downsizing, and they'll have to let you go. Mark that off your list.

READ TO PARTICIPANTS: It's important to realize this is one person's possible experience. It's not meant to tell every LGBTQ+ person's story, or to say that all LGBTQ+ people lose all the things they love, and it's definitely not for you to be able to say you "know how this feels" now. This is a particularly tragic coming out story, BUT it's also not overly dramatic. These things DO happen. And we wanted you to try to experience empathy as a means of broadening your perspective.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are your big takeaways from this activity? (key points below)
 - a. Coming out isn't a one-time thing—it's a lifelong process, and a decision people have to make again and again in new situations
 - b. There is a lot of risk in coming out, which is why many people choose not to
 - c. It's hard to predict how people will respond to someone coming out, and sometimes the results can be extremely damaging, or surprisingly positive
2. How is this activity relevant to your work as an GSA?
3. What are ways your club can support individuals who are going through the coming out process in your community?
4. What do you know now that you didn't know before participating in this activity? What can you do to learn more? How can you teach others about this experience?



Make it your own. Feel free to adapt the story as you like. You can change the severity, highlight different experiences, or even change the list of important things. You can also rewrite the story to be about experiencing transphobia, biphobia, racism, or ableism. Think about what you believe would be more beneficial for the group you're working with, and modify the story to suit their needs.

Adapted from Safe Zone Project.

"COMING OUT" ... "of the closet." is the process by which someone...

1. Accepts and identifies with their gender identity and/or sexual orientation; and
2. Shares their identity willingly with others.

Sometimes We talk about coming out as if it were a one time thing. But for most folks coming out is a **series of decisions** – sometimes daily – that LGBTQ people navigate in every new setting they enter. (Most people aren't like Ellen, where they come out once and then the whole world knows.)

People may be "out" ⇨ in some spaces, and "in" ⇨ in others.

⇨/⇨ to Family ⇨/⇨ to Friends ⇨/⇨ to Classmates/Coworkers ⇨/⇨ to Religious Community

A decision to come out to a person or group is one of safety, comfort, trust, & readiness.

It's dangerous, unhealthy, and unhelpful to force someone to come out, or to "out" someone else (i.e., disclosing someone's gender identity or sexual orientation to others without the person's consent), **regardless of your intentions** (sometimes people think they're being helpful, or acting on the person's behalf to conquer their fears), but...

IF SOMEONE COMES OUT TO YOU...

DON'T:

1. Say "I always knew," or downplay the significance of their sharing with you.
2. Go tell everyone, bragging about your "new trans friend."
3. Forget that they are still the person you knew, befriended, or loved before.
4. Ask probing questions, or cross personal barriers you wouldn't have crossed earlier.
5. Assume you know why they came out to you.

DO:

1. Know this is a sign of huge trust! (Yay!)
2. Check-in on how confidential this is (Do other people know? Is this a secret?)
3. Remember that their gender/sexuality is just one dimension (of many) of who they are.
4. Show interest and curiosity about this part of them that they are sharing with you.
5. Ask them how you can best support them.

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

PURPOSE: This activity will assist participants in understanding and unlearning some of the stereotypes and biases we hold about LGBTQ+ folks based purely on labels. This activity encourages teamwork and allows for extended discussions to better understand preexisting ideas, biases, and possible prejudices we may hold. Having these discussions gives us the space to reflect and find support and resources to further educate ourselves and improve our efforts to be inclusive of all members of the LGBTQ+ community.



ESTIMATED TIME: 45 min.

MATERIALS: Newsprint or whiteboard and markers; five index cards

DIRECTIONS:

1. Before the session, write one of the following phrases on each of five index cards: GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, and STRAIGHT
2. Begin by randomly dividing the group into five smaller groups (preferably of at least three people). Give a sheet of newsprint or section of the whiteboard and a marker to each group; at the same time, hand the group one of the five index cards that you prepared in advance.
3. Explain to the participants that each group has been given an identity and that the group will now draw a person who looks like or represents that identity. Participants can offer their own ideas or suggest ideas they have heard from others. Be sure to remind everyone that this is a safe space and that no one needs to be afraid or worried about suggesting a trait or idea to include in the group's picture. However, encourage the groups to work together in coming up with the final product. Tell them that they will have 15 minutes to complete their drawing.
4. After 15 minutes have passed, ask all the groups to stop working even if they have not finished. Then ask each group to stand up and explain their drawing in detail. After all the groups have explained their drawings, lead a group discussion using the questions below.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How did the groups decide what each person would look like? Was it difficult to come up with a picture?
2. Where did your ideas come from about what each of these people looked like? People you know? The media?
3. Do your pictures convey positive or negative images of the identities?
4. Which of the identities do you think was easiest to draw? Hardest? Why?
5. Do the pictures drawn give a limited representation of the LGBTQ+ community? What is missing? What is overly represented in the pictures?
6. What conclusions if any can you draw from this exercise?

Adapted from Girl's Best Friend Foundation and Advocates for Youth, Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth: A Toolkit.

EXPLORING YOUR OWN GENDER JOURNEY

PURPOSE: As a club committed to building an environment and school climate that are safe for all LGBTQ+ students to authentically express and identify their gender, we must find ways to work toward embracing the richness of the gender spectrum. We can broaden our understanding of gender by considering and reflecting on our own experiences, beliefs about gender, and the messages we have been taught, both growing up as well as in our day-to-day encounters in school.

MATERIALS: Preprinted worksheet and writing utensils for participants

ESTIMATED TIME: 30-45 min. Feel free to do the activity in two shorter sessions (see notes below)

DIRECTIONS:

Before facilitating this activity with others, review the instructions and make worksheet copies for participants. As the facilitator, take some time to reflect on your own experiences with gender and complete the worksheet yourself. If you do the activity in two sessions, only provide one page per session.



To begin the activity, ask participants to spend some time looking over and answering the questions. Instruct them to write down their answers and let them know that their responses are personal and private; no one will be required to share anything that they are not willing to, and everyone will respect that (review Group Agreements). Let participants know that there are no “correct” answers; each of us comes by our own understandings of gender in a context. Messages and traditions associated with gender are complex reflections of society, family, culture, community, and other socializing forces, and participants should use this opportunity to pause and examine their own gender history.

Encourage participants to hang on to these worksheets. They may find it interesting to revisit their reflections at some point in the future.

Facilitator Note: If facilitating this activity for teachers, parents, or someone other than students, feel free to create your own questions or ask participants to change certain words so that the questions are more applicable to them in their current role.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

If time allows and your group is so inclined, you can find ways to talk about the process; be sure to come up with some discussion questions beforehand. Here are some to get you started:



1. What was the process of the activity like for you? What impact has it had on you?
2. How can activities like this help make school communities and spaces more inclusive of transgender and gender-expansive students?

**Just remember to always refer to those group agreements you wrote and be sure to respect folks’ privacy and personal journeys.

Growing up, did you think of yourself as a boy, a girl, both, neither or in some other way? How did you come to that recognition? When? _____

What messages did you receive from those around you about gender? Did those messages make sense to you?

What's your first memory of gender defining or impacting your life? _____

How were classmates or friends you saw who did not fit into expectations about gender treated in school by others? By the adults around them? By you? _____

Have you ever been confused by someone's gender? How did that feel for you? Why do you think you felt the way you did? _____

Has anyone ever been confused by your gender, possibly referring to you in a manner not consistent with your own sense of gender? How did that feel for you? Why do you think you felt the way you did?

Is there anyone in your immediate circle (family, close friends, etc.) who is transgender or otherwise gender diverse? How would you characterize your comfort level about their gender? _____

If you were to describe your gender without talking about how you look or what you do, what would you share?

Adapted from Gender Spectrum, My Personal Gender Journey.

How would you characterize your school's overall level of safety for students whose gender is seen as different by those around them? _____

How would you characterize your school's overall level of acceptance for students whose gender is seen as different by those around them? _____

What is your own comfort level with discussing issues of gender diversity with peers (friends, classmates, etc.)? Teachers or school staff? Parents or family? _____

Based on your personal journey, how do you believe that your own previous experiences with gender influence your ideas about gender? Are there ways in which those experiences enhance your ability to create greater gender inclusiveness? Are there ways in which those experiences inhibit your ability to do so? How so?

Do you have any final reflections about documenting your gender journey? Are there any goals you wish to set for yourself, personally? For your club or school? _____

Adapted from Gender Spectrum, My Personal Gender Journey.

MISGENDERING AND RESPECT FOR PRONOUNS

PURPOSE: This activity engages participants in a conversation about pronouns, understanding misgendering, ways to combat misgendering, and how they can make sure that the gender pronouns of all students are respected.

MATERIALS: *What Are Pronouns?* Video at bit.ly/Pronouns_Minus18 (5 min)

ESTIMATED TIME: 55 min.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Introduce the lesson and let participants know that they will be examining their understanding of gender pronouns and gender-neutral language.
2. Introduce the *What Are Pronouns?* video.
Example: “We’re going to watch a video created by Minus18, Australia’s largest LGBTQ+ youth organization, called *What Are Pronouns?*”
3. Play the *What Are Pronouns?* video at bit.ly/Pronouns_Minus18.
4. After viewing the video, facilitate a group discussion on the *What Are Pronouns?* video, misgendering, gender-neutral language, and how to make sure that the gender pronouns of all students are respected.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTION PLANNING:

Define misgendering: Misgendering refers to the experience of being labeled by others as a gender other than one that a person identifies with.

- A. Have any participants experienced misgendering or unintentionally misgendered someone (without sharing names)? Let participants know that sharing their stories is appreciated but not mandatory.
- B. What should you do if you misgender someone?

Impact of Pronouns and Gender-Neutral Language:

1. In the video, they talk about how pronouns have an impact on people. How did you see using the right pronouns with people making a difference?
2. What steps can you take toward using the right pronouns for people?
3. How can we practice using gender-neutral language and make sure appropriate pronouns are respected and used at our school?

SUGGESTIONS: Write out the suggestions from the group and add them to the group agreements. (Introduce our names and pronouns to new people, make a space to display pronouns on worksheets and name tags, correct misgendering when we witness it, etc.).

TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER:

1. Have participants individually or in groups choose one of the ideas to combat misgendering and develop a plan of action to bring it to life in your school.
2. Act out scenarios of misgendering or using gendered language to address a group, brainstorm useful and respectful responses, and help each other gain confidence in practicing pronoun etiquette.
3. Use TSER’s pronoun graphic, bit.ly/TSER_GP_Poster, and have participants open a book to read sentences replacing the gendered pronouns with gender-neutral ones
4. Use GLSEN’s Educator Resource on Pronouns, bit.ly/GLSEN_Pronouns, for more tips and suggestions on gender-neutral language.



SEEING BEYOND GENDER

PURPOSE: We have the ability and power to expand our use of gender-nonspecific terminology. Using gender-nonspecific terminology is inclusive of all folks in the LGBTQ+ community specifically because it allows individuals to refer to themselves and others without making reference to gender. Some examples include: child (rather than son/daughter), sibling (rather than brother/sister), parent (rather than mother/father), and significant other, partner, or spouse (rather than girlfriend/boyfriend or wife/husband). Additionally, when we talk about someone or tell a story, we are taught to identify people mentioned by gender, either explicitly or by pronoun use. With practice, however, it's possible to reduce references to gender and to focus on more relevant content.

MATERIALS: Variety of magazines (enough for all participants)

ESTIMATED TIME: 30-45 min.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Distribute the magazines to the entire group and ask everyone to cut or rip out photos of 1-2 people from the magazine they have been given.
 - a. Participants can select any photos, as long as they are of people—close-ups of faces, portraits, and full body shots are all fine. Participants should not show others the photos they have selected.
2. Pair people up so they face one another and have them look at their own images without letting the other person see their photos.
3. Then have each person talk to their partner for three minutes about the image without using pronouns or other gendered indicators. If a person runs out of descriptors, they should make up characteristics or relationships for the person in the image, practicing using gender-nonspecific terminology.
4. When the first person's time is up, the other person in the pair should describe their photo.

After all participants have described their photos, everyone should come back to the large group and discuss the following questions.

1. How did you feel using gender-nonspecific language?
2. Was this difficult or easy for people? Why?
3. How did you feel listening only to gender-nonspecific language?
4. Did you try to guess the gender of the person in the image being described, or was it a nonissue?
5. Why do you think you had the responses you did?
6. What other reactions or thoughts did group members have around this activity?
7. What do these reactions tell us about our views on gender?

Adapted from The GLSEN Jump Start Guide, Making Your Student Club Trans-Inclusive



MICROAGGRESSION ACTIVITY

PURPOSE: This activity is intended to provide participants the opportunity to recognize how different audiences can interpret language and how microaggressions occur. It facilitates understanding of the words we use and that we should be intentional to say what we mean rather than slang or misappropriated terms to take their place.

MATERIALS: Activity worksheets (Versions A & B on pages 59-60)

ESTIMATED TIME: 30-45 min.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Define microaggressions to the group.

Definition: A microaggression is a statement, action, or incident that can be indirect, subtle, or even unintentional that contributes to discrimination against members of a marginalized group, such as the LGBTQ+ community, immigrants, women, people of color, and many other groups in our society.

2. Ask participants why they think it might be important to examine our language and the impact of microaggressions?

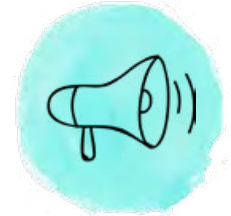
Let participants know that because language is something we use every day, we end up experiencing and witnessing countless direct and indirect forms of bias and discrimination.

Some examples are: “Don’t be a sissy” “That’s so gay” “That’s ghetto”

Whether we are aware of the implications, these expressions are used in place of the terms such as wimpy, bad, unwanted, or negative. When we use these types of expressions instead of the words that we mean we, in fact, uphold stereotypes and perpetrate -isms. Many well-intentioned individuals consciously believe in and profess equity and inclusion, but unconsciously act in a manner that contributes to oppression. Because microaggressions are so commonplace, we often do not realize that the language being used is oppressive. Microaggressions are a form of discrimination that remains highly invisible and contributes to continued harassment and oppression in our society.

3. Pass out Version A and Version B of the Microaggression Worksheet so that half the group has Version A and the remaining half has Version B. Then let them know:
 - a. Draw a line connecting the statements in the first column with all the possible implications in the second column.
 - b. Each statement may connect with more than one implication. Be ready to explain each choice. Think critically about how a person could interpret these statements as a put-down.
4. When students have completed this part of the activity, ask them to change four statements in column 1 to be less harmful.
5. After participants have made edits to their selected statement, ask them to share two or three of the microaggressions listed and the implications (this is what they matched to the statement).
6. Ask why these statements could be interpreted in such a way.
7. When the class has discussed these, ask how the statements could be changed to be less harmful or damaging.

Adapted from LaDeidre Robinson and Kelly Lynn Meredith, Breaking the Prejudice Habit.



MICROAGGRESSION VERSION A

Draw a line connecting the statements in column 1 with all the possible implications in column 2. Each statement may connect with more than one implication. Be ready to explain your choice. Think critically about how another person may interpret these statements as a put-down.

COLUMN 1

“Don’t be such a sissy.”

“Well, of course you have a bad relationship with your parents, you’re gay.”

“You speak English well.”

“America is a melting pot.”

“I don’t see color.”

“I have black friends, so ...”

“Watch blacks when they come in; they normally shoplift.”

Asking a black student what “black people think” about a situation.

“That’s retarded.”

“That’s so ghetto.”

COLUMN 2

Feminine traits are undesirable.

You are not man enough.

Classism does not affect your future.

Your sexual orientation is your only defining feature.

Being gay is unacceptable.

Being gay is unnatural.

People with mental disabilities are less important, likable, and competent.

There is no hope for you.

You don’t belong.

You will not succeed.

Your cultural background makes you unintelligent.

It doesn’t matter if you are impoverished.

Poor people should not be respected.

You must be lazy.

You are not deserving of high status.

Racism does not affect your future.

You look like a criminal.

You people are all the same.

I see you as your skin color only.

People of your race are unintelligent.

Your culture is your only defining feature.

Your upbringing does not matter.

Your experience is not important.

You are not American.

Society knows what is right and you are wrong.

Adapted from LaDeidre Robinson and Kelly Lynn Meredith, Breaking the Prejudice Habit.

MICROAGGRESSION VERSION B

Draw a line connecting the statements in column 1 with all the possible implications in column 2. Each statement may connect with more than one implication. Be ready to explain your choice. Think critically about how another person may interpret these statements as a put-down.

COLUMN 1

“You throw like a girl.”
“Where are you really from?”
Calling someone “trashy” or “classy.”
“You are a credit to your race.”
“Everyone can succeed if they try hard enough.”
Mistaking a person of color for a service worker.
Helping boys with math more than girls.
“That’s so gay.”
Assuming computer proficiency or access.
Being gay is “just a phase.”

COLUMN 2

Feminine traits are undesirable.
You are not man enough.
Classism does not affect your future.
Your sexual orientation is your only defining feature.
Being gay is unacceptable.
Being gay is unnatural.
People with mental disabilities are less important, likable, and competent.
There is no hope for you.
You don’t belong.
You will not succeed.
Your cultural background makes you unintelligent.
It doesn’t matter if you are impoverished.
Poor people should not be respected.
You must be lazy.
You are not deserving of high status.
Racism does not affect your future.
You look like a criminal.
You people are all the same.
I see you as your skin color only.
People of your race are unintelligent.
Your culture is your only defining feature.
Your upbringing does not matter.
Your experience is not important.
You are not American.
Society knows what is right and you are wrong.

Adapted from Breaking the Prejudice Habit, 2014, Virginia Ball Center, Ball State University

BULLYING QUIZ

PURPOSE: This activity will provide participants an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of bullying, its prevalence, and the detrimental effects on the entire school community. Raising awareness about bullying has helped schools decrease the behavior. Use the following quiz to mobilize your school community to build an effective anti-bullying initiative.



MATERIALS: Whiteboard and Bullying Quiz

ESTIMATED TIME: 45 min.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Ask participants how they would define bullying and write definitions or words on the board addressing the different kinds of bullying (violence, exclusion, ostracism, rumors, etc.).



Definition for reference: Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose (www.stopbullying.gov).

2. Ask participants to complete the quiz individually.
3. Involve participants in a discussion using questions provided or by creating your own.

Facilitator Note: Feel free to add questions to the quiz or make your own quiz using information about identity-based bullying and harassment. You can use data provided by GLSEN, www.glsen.org/research, or other websites.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think bullying is a serious problem in your school or community? Why or why not? For who?
2. How do you think bullies feel when they demean someone else?
3. Do you think it's possible to make a bully understand other people's feelings? Why or why not?
4. How do adults in your school or community address bullying? Have you seen adults look the other way? What kind of interventions have you seen adults use to prevent or stop bullying?
5. What kind of interventions can young people use to prevent or stop bullying? List three things you could do to defuse a bullying situation.
6. Do you think you've ever bullied someone? If so, what made you stop? What made you want to bully someone again?
7. Did any of the facts in the quiz concern you personally? Which ones?
8. After taking the quiz, are there behaviors or experiences you have had that you want to change? Describe your feelings, what you might want to change, and how you could go about making that change.



Bullying Quiz (Answer True or False)

1. Nearly one-third of American teens are involved in bullying. **True False**
2. Less than 10% of American teens admit to bullying others. **True False**
3. Students who are bullied in school are usually attentive students with good attendance. **True False**
4. Most students who bully are insecure. **True False**
5. Contrary to stereotypes, male bullies are not usually bigger and physically stronger than their peers. **True False**
6. Students who witness bullying often refuse to remain friends with the victim and feel guilty for not reporting the incident. **True False**
7. Bullies have trouble making friends. **True False**
8. Bullies do poorly in school compared to others who do not bully. **True False**
9. Most bullies discontinue violent or aggressive behavior in adulthood. **True False**
10. If you are being bullied, it's best to handle it alone. **True False**

Adapted from Teaching Tolerance, quiz originally adapted from www.safeyouth.org

Answer Key to Bullying Quiz:

1. **True:** In a recent survey, 13% admit to bullying, 11% admit to being bullied, and 6% have been bullied and also bully others.
2. **False:** See above
3. **False:** Students targeted by bullies sometimes avoid school or have trouble concentrating. They can also develop personality disorders like depression and anxiety.
4. **False:** Studies show that most bullies have confidence and high self-esteem.
5. **False:** Male bullies are usually bigger and stronger than their victims.
6. **True:** Witnessing an act of bullying has negative consequences even if you are not directly involved.
7. **False:** Bullies seem to make friends easily, particularly with other students who are aggressive and may join them in bullying.
8. **True:** The problem behaviors associated with bullying include impulsiveness, disliking school, and getting in trouble often.
9. **False:** 60% of bullies have at least one criminal conviction because the behavior carries over into adulthood.
10. **False:** Putting an end to bullying requires a commitment from everyone in a school, including teachers, custodians, students, administrators, cafeteria workers, and crossing guards. You should seek adult intervention and try to stay among friends if you are being bullied.

Adapted from Teaching Tolerance, quiz originally adapted from www.safeyouth.org

STEPS TO BEING AN EFFECTIVE ALLY WORKSHEET

PURPOSE: Being an ally is a responsibility that requires humility and integrity and should not be taken lightly. It is not about saving people, nor does it require us to be experts about someone else's experience. However, it does require that we believe oppression exists and that it is wrong whether it is happening directly to us or not. This activity helps allies examine our understanding and relation to particular oppressions and be better prepared to speak up and act against injustice.

MATERIALS: Worksheet and writing utensils

ESTIMATED TIME: 30-45 min.

DIRECTIONS:

Select a community or issue that you or your club would like to serve as an ally to and then use the worksheet on page 64 to examine your understanding of and relationship to particular oppressions while developing plans for action to speak up and act against injustice.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AFTER COMPLETING WORKSHEET:

1. How is this learning relevant to your work as an ally?
2. How is this learning relevant to your role as a student club?
3. What energizes you most as you think about implementing what you have learned in this activity?
4. What do you know now that you didn't know before participating in this activity?

Facilitator Note: Before participating in this activity, depending on participants' level of knowledge of their social identity, you may want to engage in the Social Identity Wheel Worksheet, bit.ly/Identity_Wheel, to give folks a foundation to engage in this activity.



COMMUNITY/ISSUE THAT IS THE FOCUS OF ALLYSHIP: _____

1. What perspectives does your identity bring to understanding this? How does this affect the way you reach out as an ally? _____

2. In what areas do you see yourself having privilege? _____

3. How does this affect your role as an ally? _____

4. What is the historical context of the community or issue you are serving as an ally for? How can you learn more about it? _____

5. What is your historical context and story? How can you share it with others? _____

6. Knowing your privileges, existing and needed knowledge, and ability, how can you contribute as an ally? How can you serve as a role model to other allies or those who have similar privileges? _____

7. How can we take responsibility for our own learning? What events can we attend? What courses can we take? What are sources of information available to us? _____

8. How can we work to be better listeners to those we are allies for? How can we intentionally step out of our comfort zone? _____

9. Who are the people in your life who can help keep you accountable to your goals and efforts as an ally? (Remember: allies need other allies, not the oppressed, to support them and keep each other honest in our roles as allies.) _____

10. As allies, we must accept the fact that we will make mistakes. How will you set up a system to make sure you are receiving and getting the support that you need? What would you like to improve upon in the future with this support? _____

Adapted from Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Action Planning

“-ISMS”: FROM IDENTIFICATION TO ACTIVISM

PURPOSE: Participants will identify ways in which “-isms” manifest in personal and institutional beliefs, behaviors, words, and language, as well as policies. This activity will give participants the ability to identify “-isms” in behaviors, beliefs, and policies, discuss the pros and cons of taking action against “-isms,” and develop a plan of action against bias.



MATERIALS: Diagramming “-Isms” worksheet, Plan of Action worksheet, writing utensil, whiteboard

ESTIMATED TIME: 60 min.

DIRECTIONS:

Facilitator Note: For the purpose of explaining the activity and to align the content of the publication, we have used the term Sexism. However, this activity and the accompanying worksheets are built specifically for you to use for whatever “-ism” your student club would like to identify and take action against. If you were to pick racism, transphobia, xenophobia, heterosexism, etc., you would follow all of the following steps and replace the word “sexism” with whichever “-ism” you select.

PART I: DIAGRAMMING “-ISMS”

1. Write the following definition of sexism on the board:

Sexism: prejudicial attitudes and discrimination against women on the basis of their sex. Sexism ranges from the individual to the institutional level and includes (a) beliefs, (b) behaviors, (c) use of language, and (d) policies reflecting and conveying a pervasive view that women are inferior. — Linguist Phil Herbst

Facilitator Note: It is important to let participants know that we need to acknowledge that a range of folks experience sexism, including transgender and nonbinary individuals.

2. Distribute the Diagramming “-Isms” handout and ask participants to write down examples of sexism in individual beliefs, behaviors, and use of language.

a. Also ask for an institutional policy that advances sexism (dress codes, pay gaps, maternity leave, reporting/response to sexual assault, etc.).

3. Ask participants to share and write on board:

a. What are some sexist beliefs that participants have heard peers, parents, teachers, or others express?

b. How do these attitudes sometimes manifest in someone’s behavior?

c. How do these sexist attitudes come alive in language?

d. What types of policies do institutions (schools, health insurance companies, law enforcement agencies, the government, corporations) have that advance sexism?

Facilitator Note: To assist participants, if they need some help getting started, prepare your own list of examples.



Diagramming “-Isms”

	Individual:	Institutional:
Beliefs	Men are smarter than women. It's O.K. if male students act up in class, because, as the saying goes, "boys will be boys."	
Behaviors	A teacher calls on male students more often than he or she calls on female students. Domestic violence: e.g., "A husband justifies his use of physical force to settle a domestic dispute by asserting that he is 'the head of the family.'"	
Language	Sexist slurs, jokes, or verbal expressions: e.g., "A male supervisor comments consistently about the appearance of female staff." A teacher phrases historical information in a way that suggests women are property or are otherwise not equal to men: e.g., "A slave could not claim his wife or children as his own, because the laws did not recognize slave marriages."	
Policies		A school uses textbooks that ignore or minimize the contributions of women. Police departments sometimes treat instances of domestic violence as 'family disputes' and not as crimes.

Facilitator Note: If time allows, participants also can identify individual policies and institutional beliefs, behaviors, and use of language that manifest or advance sexism.

PART II: DIAGRAMMING ACTIVISM

1. Ask participants to pick one of the examples of sexism identified in the above exercise. *Example: How women's contributions traditionally are excluded from textbooks.*
2. Ask participants to describe reasons why they may choose not to speak out against sexism in this situation. ("It won't make a difference," or "I don't want to cause trouble.")
3. Then ask participants to list some reasons why they should speak out against the example they gave for step number 1. *Example: How women's contributions traditionally are excluded from textbooks.* ("It's the right thing to do," or "I want a full education.")
4. Write responses on the board to provide a visual demonstration that there are far more reasons to stand up against sexism than to ignore it.
5. Once participants have reached consensus that action is more favorable than inaction, distribute the **A Plan of Action** worksheet.
6. Let participants know that activism in general requires four things: alliances/allies, research, tactics, and language/words. Then ask them the following questions, letting them know they should write down the collective answers on the A Plan of Action handout.
 - Alliances/Allies: With whom do we need to be working on this issue?
 - Research: What types of things do we need to know about this issue? What statistics, if any, might prove helpful? How can we acquire the necessary information?

- Tactics: What are some things we might do to raise awareness about this issue or to effect change?
- Words: What are some words or phrases we might use to challenge this form of sexism?

Facilitator Note: To assist students in note taking, you might also write responses on the board.

Plan of Action for: *How women’s contributions traditionally are excluded from textbooks.*



A Plan of Action			
Allies/Alliances	Research Needs	Tactics	Language/Words
fellow students	ways in which current textbooks minimize or ignore women	raise awareness about the issue	HERstory
teachers	what types of other, more inclusive, textbooks are available	Place an ad in the school newspaper	"The problem with gender is that it prescribes how we should be rather than recognizing how we are. Imagine how much happier we would be, how much freer to be our true individual selves, if we didn't have the weight of gender expectations." — Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
administrators		make a public appeal at a school board meeting	
school board members		make posters	
parents		host a panel discussion, invite allies	
community leaders			

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION:

1. How do you feel this activity benefits our efforts as allies? As members of the LGBTQ+ community?
2. How can we use the information in the A Plan of Action worksheet to guide our efforts in our student club?
3. What strengths does our student club have that would be useful in taking action against the “-ism” we just identified?
4. What challenges does our student club face in taking action against the “-ism” we just identified? What about challenges faced in the areas of in alliances, tactics, and research?
5. What opportunities does our club have to address these issues in our school? How can we build these opportunities into our meetings, events, and group agreements?
6. What other “-isms” can we review with this activity?



Diagramming “-Isms”		
	Individual:	Institutional:
Beliefs		
Behaviors		
Language		
Policies		

A Plan of Action			
Allies/Alliances	Research Needs	Tactics	Language/Words

Adapted from Teaching Tolerance, Sexism: From Identification to Activism.

SELF-CARE PLAN WORKSHEET

PURPOSE: This activity provides participants the opportunity to reflect on and identify methods of self-care as an important step in staying healthy in our everyday lives and as we engage in activities that can be difficult and emotionally draining. This tool gives participants a plan to help deal with daily stressors and other significant issues in their life.

MATERIALS: Whiteboard and Self-Care Plan worksheet

ESTIMATED TIME: 30 min.

DIRECTIONS:

Let participants know that self-care is an essential part of staying healthy. Having a strategy or plan can help them deal with everyday stressors and other big issues in their life. Self-care is unique to everyone, but we can always take steps toward doing some introspection about ourselves, what refuels us, and who we can go to for support.

Before the activity, write these tips on the whiteboard to help participants get an understanding of self-care and spark some ideas for their Self-Care Plan worksheet:

Nurture your social support system. It is important to have people in our lives who care about us and are there through the good times and the bad. These are the folks who make up our social support system – friends, family, and peers – who we can turn to when we need help. Think about how you can maintain your current relationships, build new ones, and perhaps even prune out unhealthy relationships.

Honor your emotional needs. Self-care activities can be simple and are centered on being good to yourself. Do things you like that keep you happy and are good for your health. Know when you need to take time out or be near other people. Get in the habit of staying in tune with your emotions.

Manage stress. Know your key stressors and how best to cope with or neutralize them.

Love yourself. Work on cultivating a positive self-image and high self-esteem. Check out the **Self-Esteem Journal** Activity on page 71.

Get support from a trusted adult. If you're uncertain how to proceed and feel overwhelmed constantly, try talking to a school counselor or social worker about your problems. You can also contact The Trevor Project at www.thetrevorproject.org or 1-866-488-7386.

Come up with a self-care plan. Use the worksheet on the next page and keep it handy to maintain your self-care plan, update as needed. Download a Spanish version here: bit.ly/SP_selfcare

Adapted from Ignacio Pacheco, Making a Self-Care Plan; and Self-Care 101, GSAFE



_____'s Self Care Plan!

<h2>Mind</h2>	<h2>Body</h2>
<p>Supportive People In My Life:</p>	<p>I Want To Accomplish:</p>
<h2>Spirit</h2>	

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SELF-ESTEEM JOURNAL

PURPOSE: Positive self-reflection through journaling has been found to improve self-esteem and general well-being. This activity can be done individually, or you can adjust the prompts to reflect on what your student club has done to make your school welcoming and affirming for all LGBTQ+ students. As individuals and as a group, it is valuable to record meaningful moments during the day or week and critically reflect on these experiences to learn about yourself and your student club on a deeper level.

MATERIALS: Personal journal or blank sheet of paper

ESTIMATED TIME: 5-10 min. per journal entry, 20-30 min. per discussion

DIRECTIONS: Select a set of prompts to respond to as a group or individuals on a set date (once a week, every day, at each meeting, etc.). Be sure to respect privacy and make sharing optional. If you use this as a group activity or want to engage in the discussion section after the journal prompts have been responded to, then let participants know that they will be asked to share what they are comfortable sharing. Also, encourage all participants to save their responses and occasionally read through their previous entries, taking note of any shift in responses. This goes for your group responses as well.

Set 1:
10 things that brought me peace today were:
I felt empowered when:
I had fun when:

Set 2:
My loved ones are proud of me because:
5 things that went well today were:
I feel happiest when:

Set 3:
My best quality is:
3 things that make me unique are:
The best part of today was:

Set 4:
I'm looking forward to:
10 people or things I am grateful for are:
I feel strongest when:

Set 5:
I feel best about myself when:
My greatest accomplishment today was:
The 3 things I love most about my life are:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How would you define self-esteem? (write answers on board)
Self-esteem: confidence in one's own worth or abilities; self-respect.
2. When we say someone has high self-esteem, what does that mean?
3. Where does high self-esteem come from?
4. Why do you think some people have high self-esteem and others have low self-esteem?
5. What causes low self-esteem?
6. When you make good choices for yourself, how does that make you feel? (ask for examples)
 - a. Does that raise your self-esteem?
 - b. Do you think that making good choices for yourself could be one way to help raise your self-esteem?
 - c. How does this relate to making our school welcoming and affirming for all LGBTQ+ students?
7. Can we sometimes be too critical of ourselves?
 - a. What happens when we do that? (ask for examples)
 - b. Can self-criticism sometimes be good for us? How? (ask for examples)
 - c. How do we know when we've crossed the line and are being too hard on ourselves?
8. Is our self-esteem permanent, or does it change?
 - a. Is it ever too late to change the way we feel about ourselves?

Adapted from Thernest.com, Self-Esteem Journal; and Live Wire Media, Big Changes, Big Choices: Enhancing Self-Esteem, Teaching Guide



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