



Build It Up

A Guide for Creating
Effective GSA Programming

ABOUT THE COLORADO GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE NETWORK



The Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Network is a program of One Colorado, a statewide organization dedicated to securing equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) Coloradans.

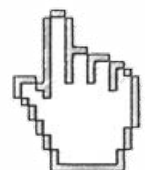
The Network was launched as part of a comprehensive plan to empower lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) and allied students to combat bullying in their schools. To support these student efforts, the Colorado GSA Network has developed tools and resources for Gay-Straight Alliances to educate their schools and communities.

Colorado GSA Network was also created to build a statewide network of Gay-Straight Alliances, to connect students from across the state, and to facilitate leadership development through regional and statewide engagement.

To learn more about the Colorado GSA Network, please visit our website at www.cogsanetwork.org or call 303-396-6443.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1** About This Guide
- 4** August: Welcome Back and Year-Long Planning
- 8** September: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- 11** October: LGBT History Month
- 14** November: Transgender Awareness
- 17** December: Safe Schools and Bullying Prevention
- 20** January: Gay-Straight Alliance History and GSA Day
- 23** February: Know Your Student Rights
- 26** March: Activism and Advocacy
- 29** April: Intersections of Identity and Isms
- 32** May: End of the Year Summary
- 36** Appendices



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide serves as a resource for students involved in their Gay-Straight Alliance or other groups that work to end anti-LGBTQ bullying or create safer, more inclusive climates for LGBTQ students. As a resource, this guide includes a number of activities and materials that students can use in their student clubs to stay active and bring awareness to LGBTQ issues. Depending on the needs of your GSA, feel free to use any pieces of this guide and arrange the activities in a way that works best for your group.

The guide includes the following sections:



MONTHLY TOPIC

For each month, we've recommended a theme. These monthly themes, or topics, explore a number of different LGBTQ and student issues. Each month details a variety of activities that your GSA can participate in. These activities can be used in your meetings or they can also be used for a wider audience to bring awareness to the work that your group does in your school.



DISCUSSION

The discussion topics in the guide are activities to engage your membership in dialogues about a number of LGBTQ issues. For these discussions, it might be helpful to make a list of a couple of questions and break into smaller groups for your members to get comfortable talking about these issues. After small group discussions, you can bring everyone back to a larger group to debrief or ask each group to give a brief description of the conversation they had in the group.

To better prepare for the discussion, it's a great idea to familiarize yourself with the questions, definitions, and content needed to have a productive dialogue with your group. If you have a team of leaders that meets, chat with them about the topics to ensure they are prepared for the large group discussion. If there are other questions about the discussion content, your sponsor might be able to help, or you can contact the Colorado GSA Network for additional support.

Debrief questions are given at the end of many activities. These are important opportunities for your members to reflect, process, and share their experiences as participants in these exercises. The questions can be used to debrief, or your members can start a discussion. Remember, debriefs can get personal, emotional, and reflective so maintain a safe space to ensure everyone feels like they can share and support each other through these activities.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

The team-building activities are opportunities for your members to connect on a deeper level through personal and professional growth. These activities are designed to engage your membership in ways that help them explore more about their own identity and their role as a member of your GSA. Remember that some of these issues are personal so make sure to maintain a safe, accepting, and affirming environment by following the group's guidelines or ground rules. For additional suggestions on ways to maintain safe space or support members of your group, please contact the Colorado GSA Network.



FILMS AND BOOKS

Film and book suggestions are included to provide additional ways to learn about the monthly topics. Films can be used as group activities, or they can be school-wide events sponsored by your GSA for a larger audience. The book suggestions can be monthly reading and discussion activities within your group; they might also make great additions to your school library. Again, we've only included a few suggestions so feel free to look for other LGBTQ films or books that will work well for your group.



RESOURCES

The online resources included in this guide provide more information on the monthly topics. They can help you prepare for your group discussions or can lead you to other resources that might be of interest to your group. Again, these are only some of the LGBTQ resources out there so feel free to find your own helpful resources. If you find a great resource, let us know!

ABOUT THIS GUIDE



EVENTS

The events section of the guide provides ideas for events that can be sponsored by your GSA or events that you can collaborate with other student clubs in your school to bring more awareness to different issues. Some of the events are nationwide days of action for LGBTQ groups, such as National Coming Out Day, Ally Week, National Transgender Day of Remembrance, GSA Day, and the Day of Silence. Use these event ideas to grow your membership and to provide opportunities for participation in your GSA.

For tips on planning successful events, please refer to “Get It Started: A Guide for Developing Gay-Straight Alliances” or visit the Colorado GSA Network website. Also, feel free to contact the Network for any additional support or event ideas for your GSA.





AUGUST



THEME: WELCOME BACK AND YEAR-LONG PLANNING

As students are coming back to school, it's time to get your Gay-Straight Alliance back together. Participate in your welcome back club fair to advertise for your first meeting and recruit new members. Since it's the beginning of the school year, plan for the year so your membership knows what to expect in the GSA.



DISCUSSION

Welcome and Introductions

After you welcome your members to the Gay-Straight Alliance, have members introduce themselves so the students can get to know each other and talk about what brought them to the meeting. Also, feel free to use the "Sample First Meeting Agenda" included here, as Appendix A.

Establish Ground Rules

Ground rules create a safe space in your GSA. These are the rules that every member should follow to ensure respect in the group. It's a good idea to post these rules at every meeting so members are aware of them and follow them to maintain a safe space. Consider some of the follow ground rules:

1. "One diva, one mic." Only one person speaks at a time.
2. Step up, step back. If you are talking a lot, leave space for others to speak up. If you aren't participating, challenge yourself to step up.
3. Do your best, and assume everyone else is doing their best.
4. Respect the confidentiality of others.
5. Try on new ideas.
6. Engage openly and honestly.
7. Turn your cell phones on vibrate.
8. Speak from your own experiences, using "I" statements.
9. Have fun.

Adapted from Jamie Washington, PhD "Diversity and Social Justice Learning Foundations" and the GSA Network



AUGUST

Set Semester/Year Goals

What do the members of your group want to accomplish this semester? How will you make this a successful year for your GSA? When planning for the year, set concrete goals. For example, if you want to increase your membership, one of your goals could be “add five new members to our GSA.” For planning events, a goal might be to have “one event per month.” A couple of areas your GSA can focus on for setting goals include:

- Membership
 - Example: The GSA will add five new members.
- Events
 - Example: The GSA will have one event per month.
- Supportive teachers
 - Example: The GSA will identify five supportive teachers to whom students can reach out.

How many new members do you want to have? How many events will your GSA put on this year? How will you increase the number of supportive teachers in your school? Setting these goals and using them to develop your plans will give your group something to work toward throughout the year.

Compile a Calendar

Build a calendar that is accessible to all members of your group. Include dates that your GSA wants to do certain activities. Consider many of the LGBT days of action and decide which events your group wants to take on. It can be helpful to assign to each event a point person that is responsible for leading a group of members to plan the event. If you have an events committee, use the committee to plan these events, and assign different responsibilities for each member of the group to be involved.

A sample calendar could include the following events or themes each month.

August – Semester/Year-Long Planning

September – Sexual Orientation and Gender Education

October – LGBT History Month, National Coming Out Day, Ally Week

November – Transgender Day of Remembrance

December – Safe Schools, Bullying, and Upstanding

January – Gay-Straight Alliance Day and GSA History

February – Student Rights in Public Schools

March – Student Activism and GSA Leadership Summit

April – Intersections of Identity

May – GSA Reflection and Evaluation of the School Year

June – Pride



AUGUST



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

“Who Am I?” Activity

Purpose: This activity allows members of the group to share more about their culture and identity by giving each group member an opportunity to reflect on parts of their identity they feel connected to. Each member will be able to share their information at the end of the activity, which provides a way for members to learn more about each other.

Materials: Paper, magazines, glue/tape, pens/markers, and scissors

Directions:

1. Each member gets a piece of paper and writes their name on it.
2. Members should create a collage about themselves using the different materials provided like drawings, magazine cut-outs, symbols, etc.
3. Encourage members to include a few things that people may not know about them.
4. After members have finished their collage, bring the group together to have each person share their poster with the group
5. Have members save their collages to participate in a reflection activity at the end of the year. The year-end activity is a reflection on how the members have grown throughout the year.

Debrief:

Was this a difficult exercise? What made it difficult?

What was your process for deciding what or what not to include?

Was there anything that surprised anyone?



AUGUST



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

It's Elementary: Talking About Gay Issues in Schools, Women's Educational Media, 1996

Books

GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Queer and Questioning Teens, Kelly Huegel

Not the Only One: Lesbian and Gay Fiction for Teens, Jane Summer

Queer: The Ultimate LGBT Guide for Teens, Kathy Belge, Marke Bieschke, and Christian Robinson

Two Teenagers in Twenty: Writings by Gay and Lesbian Youth, Ann Heron



RESOURCES

Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance Network www.cogsanetwork.org

www.facebook.com/coloradogsanetwork



EVENT IDEAS

Gay-Straight Alliance Kick-Off Event

To begin recruiting new members into your organization, host a school-wide event that brings awareness to the purpose and goals of your GSA. Remember to advertise for these events and have food to bring new students to your meeting.

Student Organization Fair

If your school has a beginning-of-the-year fair for student organizations, sponsor a table to talk about your GSA and recruit new members. Give out materials about your GSA, when and where your meetings are held, who the GSA advisor is, and some information about what your group will do for the year.



SEPTEMBER



THEME: SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

As advocates and allies for the LGBTQ community, it's important to understand different LGBTQ terms. By bringing more awareness to the issues that LGBTQ students face and becoming more familiar with LGBTQ topics, your group can educate others. The beginning of the school year is also a good time to reflect on why you're involved in your GSA, why you're committed to working on LGBTQ issues, and how you can work throughout the year to grow as an LGBTQ advocate.



DISCUSSION

LGBTQ Definitions and Discussion Questions

Purpose: This activity will help members expand their LGBTQ vocabularies. With all the definitions and identities, it's important to learn their meanings to share this information with others.

Materials: LGBTQ Definition Sheet

Directions:

Find the LGBTQ Definition Sheet in Appendix B, make two separate note cards—one with the LGBTQ term and the other with the LGBTQ definition. Have your group members match the terms as a group. Using a chalkboard, white board, or large sheets of chart paper, this can be a great team building and communication exercise while the students are sharing their thoughts about the terms and then deciding which term is paired with the appropriate definition.

After the group has paired the terms and definitions, ask someone to explain their discussion and reasoning of the placement of each term and definition. After the group has explained, inform them of the appropriate term/definition pair until all pairs are matched appropriately.

Debrief:

What made this activity easy or difficult?

Was there anything that surprised you?

Are there any terms you disagree with or information you'd like to add to different terms?



SEPTEMBER



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Self-Assessment Activity

Purpose: This self-assessment is a reflective activity about how active we are, as individuals, in LGBTQ work. This is also an opportunity to see how we, as individuals, can grow throughout the year to learn more about LGBTQ issues and be strong advocates for LGBTQ people.

Materials: Self-Assessment Response Sheet, writing utensil

Directions:

1. Find the "Self Assessment Sheet" in Appendix C.
2. Take your time and be honest.
3. Read the following statements.
4. Mark an X over the number that best describes where you believe you are now.
5. Circle the number where you believe you would like to be.

Small Group Discussion:

1. Which statement was most challenging? Why?
2. Identify a statement where there is significant difference between where you are and where you want to be. What are your feelings/thoughts about this?
3. What are some ways to get to where you'd like to be? (Feel free to ask for suggestions)

Adapted from Boulder Valley Safe School Coalition's "Everyone Counts" and Daniel Escalante



SEPTEMBER



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

The Celluloid Closet, Wolfe Video, 1995

Prayers for Bobby, 2009

Books

My Gender Workbook: How to Become a Real Man, a Real Woman, the Real You, or Something Else Entirely, Kate Bornstein



RESOURCES

Bisexual Resource Center www.biresource.net

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere www.colage.org

National Center for Lesbian Rights www.nclrights.org

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force www.thetaskforce.org

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) www.pflag.org



EVENT IDEAS

Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanic Heritage Month is September 15 through October 15. Partner with a Hispanic student organization to co-host an event. Also, celebrate Hispanic Heritage month by researching LGBTQ people and bringing more awareness to LGBTQ Hispanic figures and their contributions.

www.hispanicheritagemonth.gov



OCTOBER



THEME: LGBT HISTORY MONTH

It's LGBT History Month! Use the month to recognize LGBTQ figures and events that have formed our history. October 11 is also National Coming Out Day, a great way to hold events that celebrate "coming out," either as LGBTQ or allies to different communities. These days will allow your group to talk and build support for LGBTQ students and their allies as well as to recognize the contributions and history of LGBTQ people.



DISCUSSION

A Forgotten History

What do you know about LGBTQ History?

Who are some of the famous LGBTQ figures that you know about?

Have you learned about any of these events/figures in schools? Why or why not?

Where did you learn this information about LGBTQ history?

How can your group learn more about LGBT History Month?

How can your group teach others about LGBT History Month?



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

"Being an Ally" Group Discussion

What is an ally? What role do they play in your GSA?

Who are some people that you identify as allies?

What are some of the qualities of allies?

Why are allies so important?

What can you do to be a better ally?

What can your group do to be a better ally to other groups?



OCTOBER



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY (CONT.)

Group Reading and Reflection

Find the “Learning to Think and Act as an Ally” sheet in Appendix D and hand it out. You can have members read it silently to themselves or read it together as a group. Then have a discussion in your group about what they learned from the reading or what their thoughts are on being an ally. You can ask some of the following questions to start a discussion:

Does anyone have any points to add?

Have you done these things to be allies to others?

Do you have examples or ways to be allies to others using these points?



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

Brother Outsider: The Bayard Rustin Story, 2003

Coming Out, Coming Home: There Is No Name for This, 1997

Out of the Past, 1998

Gay Pioneers, 2004

In My Shoes, 2005 (www.colage.org/inmyshoes)

Live to Tell: The First Gay and Lesbian Prom in America, Wolfe Video, 1995

Books

Am I Blue? Coming Out From the Silence, Marion Dane Bauer

Growing Up Gay/Growing Up Lesbian: A Literary Anthology, Bennett L. Singer

To Believe in Women, Lillian Faderman

Letters From the Closet, Tony Ferrante and Paulette Jacobson

A Queer History of the United States, Michael Bronski



OCTOBER



RESOURCES

Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) www.glsen.org

Gay and Lesbian International News Network (GLINN) History Project www.glinn.com/news

GLBT History Month www.glbthistorymonth.org

Human Rights Campaign www.hrc.org

Out of the Past Video/Website www.pbs.org/outofthepast/home.html

Out Proud www.outproud.org

People with a History www.fordham.edu/halsall/pwh/index-am.html



EVENT IDEAS

LGBT History Month

In October, LGBT History month recognizes different figures and events that have shaped LGBT History. It's also a way to celebrate those figures and events to bring awareness about the LGBT Movement to your group, school, or community. www.glbthistorymonth.com

National Coming Out Day

Observed by members of the LGBTQ and allied community, National Coming Out Day, celebrated on October 11, brings awareness to LGBTQ issues and celebrates coming out, the process of disclosing your LGBTQ identity to others.

Ally Week

On October 17–21, Ally Week acknowledges the partnership of LGBTQ and allied students to make their schools safer through education, support, action, and advocacy. The week also encourages students to become allies to create more inclusive schools that protect all students from bullying and harassment. www.allyweek.com

Colorado Safe Schools Week

Sponsored by the Colorado School Safety Resource Center, Governor Hickenlooper has proclaimed is October 16–22 Colorado Safe Schools Week to highlight the work that schools and communities are doing to support safe and positive school climates. Creating safe and supportive schools allows students to fully participate in their school and increases student attendance, engagement, and achievement. For more information, visit www.safeschools.state.co.us



NOVEMBER



THEME: TRANSGENDER AWARENESS

As LGBTQ student clubs committed to ending homophobia and transphobia, it's necessary to learn about various communities. We must also ensure that our student clubs are trans-inclusive to develop allies and raise awareness to the issues that the transgender community faces.



DISCUSSION

Trans Awareness

What does transgender mean?

What is the difference between sexual orientation and gender?

How does media shape our ideas about gender?

What kinds of discrimination impact the transgender community?

Is your GSA inclusive to transgender students?

How can your GSA be an ally to the transgender community?

Adapted from True Colors GSA Curriculum



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Early Beliefs

Group Discussion: By reflecting on our past experiences, we can learn about the messages we received, at very young ages, about our perceptions of the LGBTQ community. As our perceptions have changed or will change in the future, it is important to reflect on how those experiences changed our opinions and to analyze how we can actively change these ideas about the LGBTQ community.

Materials: Sheets of paper that include the questions below, writing utensil



NOVEMBER



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY (CONT.)

Directions:

Break the group into small groups of two to three and have them share their answers to the following questions. After the small group discussion, come back together as a large group and discuss some common themes among the entire group.

1. Thinking back to your childhood, what were some of the things you learned about LGBTQ people (positive, negative, etc.)?
2. How did you learn these things (family, peers, media, etc.)?
3. How did that impact that way you talked about and interacted with LGBTQ people?
4. Of these beliefs, were any developed based on direct experience?
5. Which of these ideas do you still believe and/or act upon?
6. How did these beliefs impact others? Yourself?
7. Which ideas do you want to change?
8. How will you change them?

Adapted from GLSEN's "Our Earliest Beliefs"



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

Boys Don't Cry, 1999

Transamerica, 2005

The Brandon Teena Story, 1998

Two Spirits, 2009

Books

Luna, Julie Ann Peters

Queer Theory, Gender Theory: An Instant Primer, Riki Ann Wilchins



NOVEMBER



RESOURCES

Bending the Mold: An Action Kit for Transgender Youth www.lambdalegal.org

I Think I Might Be Transgender, Now What Do I Do? www.advocatesforyouth.org

National Center for Transgender Equality www.transequality.org

Transgender Day of Remembrance www.transgenderdor.org

Transgender Law and Policy Institute www.transgenderlaw.org

United States Student Association's Transgender Inclusion Guide www.usstudents.org/our-work/lgbt-sep



EVENT IDEAS

Transgender Day of Awareness

Transgender Day of Remembrance on November 20 memorializes the lives lost due to the hate crimes committed against transgender folks. The Day also brings awareness to transphobia, the irrational fear of those perceived to blur gender roles that can be expressed by stereotyping, harassment, or violence. www.transgenderdor.com

Native American Heritage Month

To celebrate Native American Heritage Month, identify members of the Native American community who are also LGBTQ to bring awareness to the two identities. Also, learn about the two-spirit community and Native Americans' views of gender. www.nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov



DECEMBER



THEME: SAFE SCHOOLS AND BULLYING PREVENTION

Since GSAs create a safe, supportive, and affirming environment for LGBTQ students and their allies, equip your group with the tools you need to combat bullying and harassment in your school. These discussions, tools, and exercises can enhance your efforts to create a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students.



DISCUSSION

Inclusion/Exclusion in Schools

Purpose: Participants share their experiences as students to bring awareness about the ways students feel “included” or “excluded” in their schools and how the student organization can play an important and supportive role for LGBTQ and allied students.

Materials: Sheet of paper that includes the two guided questions below, writing utensil

Directions:

- Split the students into small groups of four to five people.
- Ask group members to do a five minute free write, following these guided questions:
 - Recall a time when you felt especially included, engaged, and respected in your school.
 - Recall a time when you felt especially excluded, isolated, and alienated in your school.
- Remind students that everyone’s experience is different and that feelings of inclusion/exclusion can vary broadly.
- After five minutes, ask students to share the parts of their story they are comfortable sharing. After everyone has shared, discuss similarities and differences in the stories.
- As a large group, ask for a few volunteers to share their stories. Have someone take notes about themes from the stories, about feeling either included/excluded in their school.
 - For example, what makes students feel included or excluded?



DECEMBER



DISCUSSION (CONT.)

Debrief:

What similarities are there among times when people felt included in their schools?

What are some of the themes of situations where people felt excluded in their schools?

Was it difficult to recall a time of feeling both included and excluded for this activity?

What can you do to make people feel more included and less excluded?

What can your GSA do to help people feel less isolated and supported?

Remember, since students are sharing their stories, it is important to remind students of the ground rules. Active listening is important, and you should make sure to maintain a safe space for students to share their stories.

Adapted from EdChange's "Inclusion/Exclusion"



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Bullying Intervention Scenarios

Purpose: Identifying and preparing for different school-based situations can help students create safer schools. By role playing and brainstorming in your GSA, students will feel more comfortable when they run into these situations in their school.

Materials: Copies of each scenario, paper, writing utensils

Find the "Safe Schools and Bullying Scenarios" Sheet in Appendix E

Directions:

1. Split into groups and give each of the groups one of the following scenarios. Give the groups 20 minutes to answer the questions and come up with their plans.
2. After time has passed, have each group present their scenario, answers, and the ideas that were shared to overcome their particular situation.
3. As a larger group, you can discuss each of the scenarios and ask the larger group if they have ideas or strategies to add.



DECEMBER



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

Bullied, Southern Poverty Law Center, 2010

Gay and Lesbian Youth: Making History in Massachusetts, Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth, 1994

Setting the Record Straight, GLSEN, 1995

Teaching Respect for All, GLSEN, 1996

Books

Becoming Visible: A Reader in Gay and Lesbian History for High School and College Students, Kevin Jennings

Telling Tales Out of School, Kevin Jennings



RESOURCES

Colorado Safe Schools Resource Center www.safeschools.state.co.us

The Safe Schools Coalition www.safeschoolscoalition.org



EVENT IDEAS

World Aids Day

Celebrated on December 1, World AIDS day brings awareness to HIV/AIDS and also memorializes people who have lost their lives due to HIV/AIDS. You can participate by wearing a red ribbon, the international symbols for AIDS awareness. www.worldaidsday.org



JANUARY



THEME: GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE HISTORY AND GSA DAY

Your GSA's work to create safe schools, build community, and develop young leaders is important and should be talked about. In honor of GSA Day, use January to equip your group with the tools to talk effectively about your work. Learn more about your school's GSA and about the history of GSAs to broaden your understanding of the critical work you do. Also, take this opportunity to reflect on the previous semester and to plan for the year ahead.



DISCUSSION

Gay-Straight Alliance Group Discussion

What did the GSA accomplish in the fall semester?

What did you learn as a GSA member?

What did you learn in the fall that will help your work in the spring semester?

What were some challenges faced? How can they be improved for the spring semester?

GSA History Discussion

In honor of GSA Day, talk together about the History of the Gay-Straight Alliance and Safe Schools Movement. Did you know the first GSA in the United States began with a gay-straight partnership?

Find out more information on GSA Day's website and discuss how the history of GSAs impacts your club. Also, find out more information about the history of the GSA in your school. If there is no known history, have a member or group of members serve as historians, collecting photos and event fliers and recording notes from your meetings to pass on to future GSA leaders.

Focus on learning the history and impact of GSAs and on creating your group's own unique history. Consider holding a GSA Day event to celebrate your work.

<http://gsaday.org/info/gay-straight-alliance-history/>



JANUARY



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Gay-Straight Alliance Commercial

Purpose: To prepare for GSA Day and learn how to talk about your GSA, make a TV commercial that is quick, fun, and creative.

Materials: Video camera and equipment to review the commercials

Directions:

1. Divide the students into groups of three to five.
2. Instruct the groups that they will have 20 minutes to come up with a commercial that will last 90-120 seconds. The commercial will be an advertisement, convincing someone to join the GSA. This is a great way to learn how to talk about the GSA, reflect on your GSA's highlights, and bring new people into your club.
3. After each group has prepared their TV spot, have each group perform their idea in front of the entire group.



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

Beyond Gay: The Politics of Pride, 2009

Books

Making History: The Struggle for Gay and Lesbian Equal Rights, Eric Marcus

Standing Out, Standing Together, Melinda Miceli



RESOURCES

Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance Network www.cogsanetwork.org

National GSA Day www.gsa.org

Out History about Gay-Straight Alliances http://www.outhistory.org/wiki/Gay-Straight_Alliances



JANUARY



EVENT IDEAS

Gay-Straight Alliance Day

Celebrated on January 25, Gay-Straight Alliance Day is a day of action that recognizes the work that Gay-Straight Alliances do to eliminate bullying, harassment, homophobia, and transphobia. For GSAs, the day serves as an opportunity for GSAs to bring awareness to and educate others about their group. The day also celebrates the contributions that GSAs make within their school and community. Visit www.gsaday.org for more information on how to plan a fun GSA day event to honor the work you're doing.



No Name-Calling Week

In January, No Name-Calling Week is a week of education and awareness about the impact of name-calling, harassment, and bullying. Additionally, there are educational tools available to students and staff to help your group eliminate name-calling and bullying in your schools. www.nonamecallingweek.org



FEBRUARY



THEME: KNOW YOUR STUDENT RIGHTS

The Colorado State Legislature, which begins their session in January, drafts, reviews, and debates issues that impact all Coloradans. In preparation for Colorado GSA Network's Student Lobby Day at the Capitol, learn more about your local, state, and federal representatives and the issues that impact your community. As a group of student advocates, it's also important to recognize the laws that protect students in schools and the responsibility of schools to uphold these laws.



DISCUSSION

Colorado Legislative Session Exercise

In preparation for Colorado GSA Network's Student Day at the Capitol, have your GSA research legislation they might be interested in talking about at Lobby Day. Students can search for bill information on the Colorado State Legislature's website: www.leg.state.co.us. Another way to find information is to read local newspapers or do an internet search.

There are many bill topics to choose from, but some that topics that might interest you could include:

1. Education

Funding for Kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) and higher education is always an issue since the state has been giving less and less money to fund education for many years. School discipline policies are also an issue for the legislature, which could include legislation that establishes the training school resource officers will receive, when students will be referred to law enforcement, and other disciplinary practices.

2. Immigration

It's likely that there will be many bills on immigration during the legislative session. A student-focused bill that has been introduced in recent years is Tuition Equity, referred to as ASSET. If passed, this bill would give in-state tuition to undocumented students who have attended a Colorado high school for at least three years and who have been admitted to an institution of higher education in Colorado.



FEBRUARY



DISCUSSION (CONT.)

After the group has found legislation they are interested in, instruct them to find the following information:

1. Who are the bill sponsors?
 - Which district does each of the sponsors represent?
2. What is the summary of the bill?
3. Why are you interested in this bill?



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Concentric Circles

Purpose: Through a series of questions, group members can learn more about each other, their experiences, and their perspectives. It's a safe and inclusive way to give members the opportunity to talk with all members of their GSA about various topics.

Materials: None

Directions

1. Divide the group into two separate, even-numbered groups. Have the groups form two circles, an inner circle and an outer circle. The inner circle and the outer circle should be facing each other.
2. Instruct the participants that you will ask a series of questions and that each person has two minutes to share. As the facilitator, keep the time and tell the group when it is time for their partner to share. After each person in the pair has shared, have the participants trade partners. For example, the inner circle will move two people to the right, or the outer circle moves one person to the left.
3. Ask a number of questions depending on the topic you'd like to discuss. Start off with safe questions to get people to open up and feel comfortable with the activity. Examples of safe questions include: Do you have any siblings? Where did you grow up? Do you have a person you admire? After the group gets comfortable, move into deeper questions, such as: Is there a challenge that shaped your identity? Do you have an experience that defined any of your identities?
4. After you have completed the activity, have a group discussion about some of the things that came up during the activity, such as: Was there anything that surprised you? Are there things you wish you would have shared but didn't? What did you learn from the activity?



FEBRUARY



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

Tongues Untied, Wolfe Video, 1989

The Times of Harvey Milk, 1984

Books

Milk: A Pictorial History of Harvey Milk, Dustin Lance Black and Armistead Maupin

The Harvey Milk Story, Kari Krakow and David Gardner



RESOURCES

American Civil Liberties Union – Get Busy, Get Equal www.gbge.aclu.org

Lambda Legal – Out, Safe and Respected: Your Rights at School
www.lambdalegal.org/publications/out-safe-respected/

Transgender Law Center www.transgenderlawcenter.org



EVENT IDEAS

African American Heritage Month

Identify LGBTQ African Americans to highlight their contributions through awareness activities or film showings. Partner with African American student clubs to co-host an event to reach a wider audience.

www.africanamericanheritagemonth.gov

Student Day at the Capitol

The Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance Network will host a Student Day at the Capitol to bring students involved in GSAs to the Capitol to talk about issues that impact them. The event is an opportunity to empower and train students to lobby their state legislators and share their experiences to help influence the legislative process for their respective communities. For more information, visit the Colorado GSA Network website at www.cogsanetwork.org or call 303-396-6443.



MARCH



THEME: ACTIVISM AND ADVOCACY

As student advocates for LGBTQ issues and safe schools, your GSA has worked to bring more visibility and engage people in your work. Not only can your group be active in school, but there are many local, statewide, and national issues that you can get involved with. Your group can work on advocating for stronger policies, providing feedback on best practices, and organizing to raise awareness about your group's issues. The Colorado GSA Network is also hosting the GSA Leadership Summit to provide training workshops and networking opportunities for students across Colorado.



DISCUSSION

Gay-Straight Alliance Activism and Advocacy

What is activism?

What do your school's policies say about sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression?

What are some LGBTQ issues you'd like to change?

What are some community issues you'd like to change?

How can you make these changes, and when will you do it?

Who are your state legislators?

Are there any issues in the Colorado Legislature that you're interested in?





MARCH



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Day of Silence Event Planning

The Day of Silence draws attention to the silencing impacts of anti-LGBTQ bullying and harassment in schools. To represent this silencing effect, students vow to be silent throughout the day. The event's website, www.dayofsilence.org, has many tools to help students prepare for the day of silence, including talking points to talk with teachers and administrators about why students are participating and a card with information that students can show their teachers and others about why they are silent as well as t-shirt and button ideas to show your support for the day. A "Breaking the Silence" event after school is a great way to discuss and debrief the events of the day and to share the experience with others. Consider partnering with other schools or your community to bring more awareness to the Day of Silence.

As a group, use Colorado GSA Network's "Developing a Work Plan for a Successful Event" Sheet, found in Appendix F, to plan for the Day of Silence in April.



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

Prom Queen, 2004

Stonewall 25, Wolfe Video, 1994

Books

Everyday Activism: A Handbook for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual People and Their Allies,
Michael Stevenson and Jeanine Cogan

Hearing Us Out: Voices from the Gay and Lesbian Community, Roger Sutton



MARCH



RESOURCES

United States Student Association www.usstudents.org



EVENT IDEAS

Colorado GSA Network's Leadership Summit

The Colorado GSA Network is hosting a Gay-Straight Alliance Statewide Leadership Summit in March. The Summit will bring together students from across the state to participate in a leadership conference to empower and engage them in LGBTQ work. Students will have the opportunity to share information about their clubs, facilitate workshops and presentations, and network with other students across the state who are invested in ending bullying, homophobia, and transphobia. To learn more about the Summit, visit the Colorado GSA Network website at www.cogsanetwork.org or call 303-396-6443.

Women's Heritage Month

To honor Women's Heritage Month, partner with women's organizations to highlight the contributions of LGBTQ women in history. www.nwhp.org



APRIL



THEME: INTERSECTIONS OF IDENTITY AND ISMS

Relationships with other student clubs can be developed in many ways. These relationships are opportunities to learn about other issues and identities and to explore the intersections in your work to build an inclusive environment in school. These shared and unique experiences help shape the way we do our work through story-telling that builds lasting coalitions committed to similar issues.



DISCUSSION

Name and Family Identity

Purpose: This activity is an opportunity for your members to share the meaning behind their names. There are stories behind our names, our families, and our experiences, and this activity allows your members to share this information.

Materials: Paper and markers

Directions:

Post sheets of chart paper on the wall and have your group members answer the following questions (inform individuals that they can choose to not answer questions):

1. What is your full name and its significance? Named after someone, has historical or cultural meaning, etc.?
2. Where were you born?
3. Where are your parents from? Grandparents?
4. How did your family end up in (the town you live in)?

After each member of your group has answered the questions, allow the students time to share their answers with the rest of the group, if they choose to volunteer.



APRIL



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Drawing Conclusions

Purpose: Discussing, in a group setting, preconceived ideas about LGBTQ people, their identities, and characteristics allows us to understand how we receive messages about LGBTQ people and how we can address those messages in our work to make spaces more inclusive.

Materials: Paper, markers, index cards

Directions:

1. To prepare for the activity, write one of the following identities on the index cards:
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Straight
2. Divide into groups of three to five people. Each group needs a sheet of chart paper, markers, and an index card.
3. Instruct each group that they have fifteen minutes to draw a person that represents the identity on their card. They can include their own ideas or ideas they have heard from others. Again, the students should feel comfortable having this conversation in a safe space, so remind the group of the ground rules to maintain respect.
4. After time has passed, ask for a volunteer(s) to present the group drawing and share how they decided which traits are part of the picture's identity.

Debrief:

How did your group decide what your person would look like?

How were these ideas developed about LGBTQ and straight people?

How do your pictures represent each of the identities? Positively, negatively?

Were there any traits you thought should have been presented that weren't?

Why is this exercise important to the work of the GSA?

Adapted from Advocates for Youth "Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth: A Toolkit"



APRIL



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

Brother to Brother, 2004

De Colores, Garrett Lenoir, 2001 (www.vimeo.com/2303777)

The Early Works of Cheryl Dunye, 2008

Books

Beloved Daughter, Family Letter Project (www.labrys.org/family)

From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun, Jacqueline Woodson



RESOURCES

Branching Seeds of Resistance www.coavp.org

Day of Silence www.dayofsilence.org

FIERCE “Coming Out, Stepping Up: Organizing to Build the Power of LGBTQ Youth”
www.fiercenyc.org



EVENT IDEAS

Day of Silence

The Day of Silence draws attention to the silencing impacts of anti-LGBTQ bullying and harassment in schools. To represent this silencing effect, students vow to be silent throughout the day. The event’s website, www.dayofsilence.org, has many tools to help students prepare for the day of silence, including talking points to use when telling teachers and administrators why they are participating and a card with information that students can show their teachers and others explaining why they are silent, as well as t-shirt and button ideas to show your support for the day. A “Breaking the Silence” event after school is a great way to discuss and debrief the events of the day and share the experience with others. Consider partnering with other schools or your community to bring more awareness to the Day of Silence.



MAY



THEME: END OF THE YEAR SUMMARY

It's the end of an active year for your GSA, so use this month as an opportunity to reflect, celebrate, and build for next year. Transition your leadership for the next year, pass on materials to the new leaders, and reflect on your year as a club in your school. Celebrate your accomplishments, including growing your membership, planning successful events, and increasing the number of supportive people in your school. Wrap up the school year and build on your success.



DISCUSSION

Goal Evaluations and Year Reflections

What has the GSA done in the past year?

What was done well?

Are there things you'd like to improve for the future?

Looking back at the goals from the beginning of the year, what progress has the GSA made?

Which goals will carry over to next year?

What are some of your goals for the GSA next year?

How did you contribute?

How would you have liked to contribute more to the group's work?



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Self-Reflection and Looking Back

Note: This activity can be done as a two-part process or as individual activities.

Part I: Looking Back

Purpose: Looking back at the collages from the beginning of the year, members can self-reflect to identify their growth and development throughout the year. Recognizing the experiences of the past, we can also understand how we can continue to grow in the future.

Materials: Collages from the beginning of the year



MAY

Directions:

1. Instruct the students to bring the collages that they put together at the beginning of the year.
2. Give the students five minutes to reflect on their collages, keeping the following ideas in mind:
 - What would you change about your collage? Why?
 - Is there anything you would add to your collage now?
 - Do any pieces of your collage have a different meaning than at the beginning of the year? Why?
 - Looking back at your collage, is there anything that surprised you?

Part II: "I Am" Poem Reflection

Purpose: Self-reflection is an engaging way for your membership to identify different parts of their identities and to recognize how their identities have been shaped, changed, and/or developed. Writing a self-reflective poem encourages self awareness and its relationship to the work of your GSA.

Materials: Paper, writing utensil

Directions:

1. Instruct your membership to take fifteen minutes to create a poem. Every line must start with the phrase "I am..." Remind the students that they can share whatever information they are comfortable with and encourage them to be creative with this exercise. For example, a poem can read:
I am a woman of color
I am queer
I am beautiful
I am smart, funny, and sincere
I am an only child
I am committed to social justice
2. After time has passed, ask for volunteers to share their poems. Again, students can share pieces of their poem or the entire poem, whatever they are comfortable sharing.

Debrief:

Was this activity easy or difficult? Why?

What did you learn about yourself? Others?

Was there anything that surprised you?

How did you feel writing your poem and sharing your poem?

How does this activity influence your work in the future?



MAY



FILM/BOOK TOOLS

Films

Watch the following films throughout the summer, suggested by Wolfe Video and Campus Pride:

www.architect.lgbtcampus.org/movie_lists/lgbt-youth-dvd-guide/download

Books

Make a summer book list and share it with your GSA members. You can find sample LGBT book lists here:

From Author Alex Sanchez - http://www.alexsanchez.com/gay_teen_books.htm

From Out Youth - http://www.outyouth.org/Book_List.htm



RESOURCES

During the summer, find out what's going on in your communities to stay involved.

Boulder

Out Boulder www.outboulder.org

Colorado Springs

Inside/Out Youth Services www.insideoutys.org

Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Center www.ppglcc.org

Denver

The Center www.glbtcolorado.org

Rainbow Alley www.glbtcolorado.org/rainbowalley.aspx

Ft. Collins

Lambda Community Center www.lambdacenter.org

Grand Junction

Western Equality www.westernequality.org

Southern Colorado

Southern Colorado Equality Alliance www.socoequality.org



MAY



EVENT IDEAS

Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Heritage Month www.asianpacificheritage.gov

Identify Asian and Pacific Islander LGBTQ people to educate others about their contributions. Partner with other groups to reach a broader audience and build partnerships with other groups.

Jewish American Heritage Month www.jewishheritagemonth.gov

Partner with other groups to reach a broader audience and build partnerships with other groups to bring awareness to LGBTQ Jewish figures in history.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA (1 HOUR)

1. Introduction and Welcome (5 Minutes)
2. Icebreaker (10 Minutes)
 - Name
 - Reason for Coming to GSA
 - What They'd Like to Get Out of and Contribute to the Group
 - Personal Goals for the Group
3. Ground Rules (5 Minutes)
 - Members Discuss What Guidelines Should Exist for Safe Space
 - Respect
 - One Person Talks at a Time
 - Confidentiality – What's Said in the Group, Stays in the Group
 - No Assumptions
 - Use "I" Statements
4. What the Group Should Do (10 Minutes)
 - How Should the Group Operate?
 - Activist, Social, Education
 - Combination of the Three?
5. Leadership Structure (15 Minutes)
 - Reflections on Leadership (5 Minutes)
 - What are Qualities of a Good Leader?
 - Leadership Needs for your Group (5 Minutes)
 - What are the Expectations/Needs of GSA Leaders/Members
 - Decide on Leadership Structure (5 Minutes)
 - Hierarchy vs. Committee vs. Board
6. Compile a Calendar (10 Minutes)
 - Meetings
 - How Often?
 - Certain Day of the Week/Month?
 - LGBTQ Holiday and Events
 - Awareness Events and Activities
 - Discussion Topics
 - What are the Topics of Each Meeting?
7. Closing with Announcements for Next Meeting (5 Minutes)

APPENDIX B – PART 1

LGBTQ DEFINITIONS HANDOUT

Coming Out (of the closet): To be “in the closet” means to hide one’s identity. Many LGBTQ people are “out” in some situations and “closeted” in others. To “come out” is to publicly declare one’s identity, sometimes to one person in conversation, sometimes to a group or in a public setting. Coming out is a lifelong process; in each new situation a person must decide whether or not to come out. Coming out can be difficult for some because reactions vary from complete acceptance and support to disapproval, rejection, and violence.

Gender Expression: Refers to the ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, and emphasizing, de-emphasizing, or changing their bodies’ characteristics. Typically, transgender people seek to make their gender expression match their gender identity, rather than their birth-assigned sex. Gender expression is not necessarily an indication of sexual orientation.

Gender Identity: Our innermost concept of self as “male” or “female,” what we perceive and call ourselves. Most people develop a gender identity that matches their biological sex. For some, however, their gender identity is different from their biological sex. We sometimes call these people transgender or transsexual, some of whom hormonally and/or surgically change their sex to more fully match their gender identity.

Heterosexism: Bias against non-heterosexuals based on a belief in the superiority of heterosexuality. Heterosexism does not imply the same fear and hatred as homophobia. It can describe seemingly innocent statements, such as “She’d drive any man wild” based on the assumption that heterosexuality is the norm.

Homophobia: Refers to a fear or hatred of homosexuality, especially in others, but also in oneself (internalized homophobia).

Queer: Historically a negative term used against people perceived to be LGBTQ, “queer” has more recently been reclaimed by some people as a positive term describing all those who do not conform to rigid notions of gender and sexual orientation. Queer is often used in a political context and in academic settings to challenge traditional ideas about identity (“queer theory”).

APPENDIX B – PART 2

LGBTQ DEFINITIONS HANDOUT

Questioning: Refers to people who are uncertain as to their sexual orientation or gender identity. They are often seeking information and support during this stage of their identity development.

Sexual Orientation: Refers to a person's emotional and sexual attraction to other people based on the gender of the other person. People may identify their sexual orientation as heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer. It's important to understand that sexual orientation and gender identity are two different things. Not all transgender young people identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or queer. Not all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer young people display gender nonconforming characteristics.

Straight Ally: Any non-LGBTQ person who supports and stands up for the rights of LGBTQ people.

Transgender: An umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose gender expression is nonconforming and/or whose gender identity is different from their birth-assigned gender.

Transphobia: Fear or hatred of transgender people; transphobia is manifested in many ways, including violence, harassment, and discrimination.

Transsexuals: Individuals who do not identify with their birth-assigned genders and sometimes alter their bodies surgically and/or hormonally. Transition (formerly called "sex change") is a complicated, multi-step process that may take years and may include, but is not limited to, Sex Reassignment Surgery.

Activity adapted from GLSEN's "Talking the Talk"

APPENDIX C

SELF-ASSESSMENT RESPONSE SHEET

- 1) I challenge others when they make heterosexist comments. (Examples: Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend/husband/wife?)
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 2) I refuse to tell jokes that are demeaning to members of the LGBTQ community.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 3) I never repeat statements that reinforce prejudice/bias.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 4) I handle conflict related to heterosexism/homophobia effectively.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 5) I actively learn about people who have a different sexual orientation than mine.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 6) I work to change school policies and practices that discriminate against the LGBTQ Community.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 7) I forgive people who make homophobic/heterosexist statements.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 8) I am comfortable working with people whose sexual orientation is different than mine.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 9) I do not allow my own prejudices/bias to interfere with my work with others.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 10) I am a strong ally to members of the LGB community
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 11) I am a strong ally to members of the transgender community
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 12) I actively educate others about the impacts of heterosexism/homophobia.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 13) I educate myself on issues that impact LGBTQ and allied communities.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true
- 14) My school is inclusive and supportive of members of the LGBTQ community.
Very untrue 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very true

APPENDIX D

LEARNING TO THINK AND ACT AS AN ALLY

1) Avoid Stereotyping

Be mindful of your use of pronouns and the questions you ask others. Make no assumptions about a person or their relationships. Avoid labels, and don't base your judgment on outer appearance. For example, you can ask "Are you seeing someone?" rather than "Do you have a boy/girlfriend?" to avoid assuming someone's sexual orientation.

2) Be Empathetic

Expand your worldview by reading, watching films, and learning from LGBTQ perspectives. Developing a better understanding of LGBTQ experiences can help you be an ally.

3) Be Aware of Your Bias

Recognize and challenge your bias to be an effective LGBTQ ally by learning how heterosexism, homophobia, and transphobia impacts the LGBTQ community.

4) Don't "Out" Someone or Push Others to "Come Out"

The "coming out" process is a personal decision. It is no one's business so don't talk about someone else's sexual orientation or assume someone's sexual orientation. Remember, not coming out may be safer than coming out.

5) Guarantee Confidentiality

Effective allies have built trust by respecting privacy and confidentiality. If you can't keep a secret, be up front about it so you don't create an unsafe environment.

6) Challenge Homophobia and Transphobia Whenever You See It

It isn't always easy, but be courageous and stand up to homophobia and transphobia when you hear name-calling or offensive jokes. If you find a joke or comment offensive, let them know. When you hear "dyke" or "fag," let them know that the language or joke offends you and the people you care about. Also, you can ask what people mean when they say something. For example, when you hear "that's so gay," ask "what do you mean by that?"

7) Know Your Resources

Be able to direct people to helpful resources. Learn school, community, state, and national resources and identify other supportive allies that can be a resource.

Adapted from Jean Hodges' "Learning to Think and Act as an Ally" and GLSEN's Safe Space Kit

APPENDIX E

SAFE SCHOOLS AND BULLYING SCENARIOS SHEET

Your friend tells you that they are starting to wonder if they might be LGBTQ. They tell you in complete confidence, asking you not to tell anyone. Your friend is afraid to talk to their parents about it because they hear their parents making negative comments about members of the LGBTQ community. How would you help your friend find information and resources about their feelings?

*Consider places or people they could reach out to for information, while maintaining confidentiality.
Consider ways that you can be supportive through the process.*

Between classes, you are walking down the hall and see a student being bullied by a group of students. The group of students is calling the student “fag/dyke” and pushes the student up against a locker. There are no staff or faculty around; what do you do?

*Would you intervene, tell someone, or watch it happen?
What would you say? How would you respond?
Would you tell someone? Who? What would you say?*

During lunch, you and a group of friends are talking about your plans for the weekend. The group is talking about going to the movies, but one of your friends says she can’t go because she has to spend the weekend with her family. Another friend responds, “That’s so gay,” and everyone laughs. How do you respond?

*Do you respond? Why or why not?
What are some appropriate things to say?
How do you respond if your friends don’t take it seriously?*

Your GSA hosts a book drive to collect LGBTQ literature for your school library. After delivering the donated books to your school’s library, the librarian refuses to add the books to the library shelves and keeps them in her office. What does your GSA do to get the books on the shelves?

*What are your group’s goals for the books?
Who are your supporters? (student groups, administrators, faculty)
Who are your opponents? Why are they opposed?
How will your group accomplish your goals?*

After you arrive at school, you learn that there was a vandalism of school lockers last night. The vandalism included racial and homophobic slurs, and LGBTQ and people of color communities have been shaken up because of the vandalism. The administration painted over the lockers and decided not to address the vandalism to cover up the situation. Students want the administration to address this issue; how does your group respond?

*What does your group want from the school administration?
Are there other groups to partner with to build student voice?
How will you deal with resistance?
What is your plan to accomplish these goals?*

APPENDIX F – PART 1

DEVELOPING A WORK PLAN FOR A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

To start organizing an event for your GSA, create a “work plan.” The plan will help you outline and track the details that need to be taken care of, who is responsible for completing the tasks, and when they need to be completed. This document should serve as a checklist and a guide for a successful event. Here are some considerations to be outlined in your “work plan”

Description of the Event

Why? – What do you want to get out of the event? Do you want to raise awareness, educate others, recruit new members, or keep your membership involved? This will help you set goals to plan for your event.

Who? – Are you hosting a speaker or group of speakers?

What? – Is the event a panel, workshop, training, or school-wide event?

When? – What is the date and time for your event?

Where? – Where is the location for your event?

Event Planning Consideration

Space

Make sure to choose a space that is safe for those who attend, while also having a location that is easy to find. Keep in mind the accessibility of the location for attendees in wheelchairs.

Hearing Impaired

Identify a person who knows sign language to be inclusive of the deaf community at your event.

Language

Including additional languages in your flyers and advertisements allow your group to reach a broader audience. Collaborate with other groups on campus and identify bilingual or multilingual supporters to assist with translation at events. When showing films, make sure to use the subtitles.

Other Access Factors

To expand your event audience, be considerate of socio-economic factors. If your location is off-campus, find a place that is accessible by public transportation or coordinate a carpool with your members. If there is an entry fee for your event, consider a sliding scale, where people pay what they can afford for the event. Another option is to have higher prices for adults than students. If possible, find a way to make your event free through fundraising or sponsorships.

APPENDIX F – PART 2

Goals and Objectives

As part of your work plan, consider how this project will help you reach your organizational goals. Set objectives for the event and discuss concrete and specific ways the event helps you reach those goals.

Timeline and Delegation

Develop a planning process that includes a timeline and delegation of tasks to complete before, during, and after the event. Set deadlines to each task and assign a point person to be responsible for completing the task.

Resources

Determine which resources you will need and assign a person (or committee) to be responsible for them. For a panel or workshop, you might need materials like markers or chart paper. And for a film, you might need a projector, projector screen, and speakers.

Evaluation

Decide how the event will be evaluated. Think about how the information will be collected, recorded, and used by your group in the future.

Outreach and Recruiting for Your Event

Advertising

As part of your work plan, consider your audience and methods to advertise inside and outside of your school. Advertising should be broader than your GSA and include other students, staff, faculty, administrators, and community members. Brainstorm the different ways to advertise in your school. Consider making announcements, placing posters on display boards, handing out flyers, and advertising in the school or community newspaper. Get creative and let us know if your group has great advertising ideas!

Organizational Partnerships

Find an opportunity to develop relationships with other clubs by co-sponsoring an event to address issues that are important to your club. Co-sponsorship can take many forms, including giving financial resources and contributing time to the event. Remember to share credit for the event and acknowledge the partnership to maintain a working relationship for the future.

Document Everything

Remember to document all the work for the event. It can be an effective tool for future planning and can also be useful to pass these details on to group member that could not attend your planning sessions. This information is also a great resource to pass on to new leaders in your GSA.

Adapted from the GSA Network

ALLIES

ADVOCACY

SUPPORT

THIS RESOURCE
GUIDE WAS DEVELOPED
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

EVENTS



FRIENDS

NETWORK

EDUCATION