



WHAT CAN I DO?

6 things you can do to be an LGBTQ* ally

Wanting to be an ally to your LGBTQ friends and classmates is a good first step in supporting them. With the right tools and determination, you have the power to make positive changes for the people in your community.*



1) **RECOGNIZE:** Reflect on the responsibilities of allyship

- Acknowledge that in our society, heterosexual & cisgender identities are often considered “normal.”
- Remember that it is not the responsibility of LGBTQ* people to educate you on their experiences. Take responsibility for your own learning!
- Allow LGBTQ* people to choose how you can be their ally. “Ally” is not a nickname—you have to earn it through trust and respect.



2) **MODEL:** Set the example for other people

- Examine your own use of anti-LGBTQ* slurs and language and stop using them.
- Use gender inclusive language and don't assume people's genders.
- Make sure that you stay safe while navigating anti-LGBTQ* spaces. If doing something big might impact your home life or personal safety, find other ways to be supportive.
- Care for yourself while you care for other people. Remember, you can't help others if you don't take care of your own mental and emotional health.



3) **ENGAGE:** Take action

- Let your LGBTQ* friends take the lead in creating their space.
- Join a GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) at your school—if there isn't one yet, ask around to see if others have started creating one and find out how you can get involved.
- Attend events, fundraisers & celebrations that touch on LGBTQ* identity or issues.
- Work with friends who don't have safe family spaces or networks to see how you can best support them.



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4) INVOLVE: Participate in advocacy and activism

- Consider how race, gender, religion, family, ability or other aspects of someone's life can change their identity as an LGBTQ* person. All LGBTQ* people are not the same!
- Stand beside your LGBTQ* friends, rather than speaking for them. Amplify their perspectives and share yours.
- Honour and advocate human and civil rights for all students. LGBTQ* rights affect us all.



5) RESPOND: Do the right thing

- Listen. Listen. Listen. Be open, non-judgemental and respectful to people who confide in you or come out to you.
- Keep things confidential—it can be really dangerous to “out” somebody who hasn't told others their LGBTQ* identity yet.
- Apologize and move on if you make a mistake. Don't make it a big deal. We're all human.



6) LINK: You aren't alone in this

- Seek out supports and resources that might help your friends or other LGBTQ* people in your life.
- Signal your support! Wear rainbow pins, clothing and other accessories that demonstrate your support for LGBTQ* people—people will recognize you as a potential ally and safe contact.
- Offer to go with your friends when they're accessing support from agencies, school or adults so they don't feel like they are all on their own.

*Remember: Even the tiniest actions can lead to big changes.
Think big and make small changes to start a culture of caring!*