

# What can I do to make my school safe for LGBTQ+ Youth?

## Ideas for students, teachers, and administrators

Everyone has a role to play in making schools a safe environment for LGBTQ+ youth to navigate and learn in. No matter your position, there are actions you can take to help create an LGBTQ+-affirming educational space.

### If you're a student:

- Report harassment, bullying, and threats targeted at LGBTQ+ students to a trusted teacher or advisor. Doing nothing can be as detrimental as the act itself.
- Encourage your teachers to address homophobia and transphobia in the classroom by posting safe space posters, stopping hate speech, and supporting gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs).
- Watch what you say. Don't use words associated with being LGBTQ+ in a negative way, and explain to friends and peers why they shouldn't either if you hear them doing so.
- Ask your school to address LGBTQ+ issues with actions such as having a Pride Week, bringing in LGBTQ+ speakers, and talking about sexuality, gender identity, and LGBTQ+ history in the classroom.
- Support your LGBTQ+ peers by joining a GSA as an ally.

### If you're a teacher:

- Stop hate speech in your classroom. Speak out if you hear a student in your class or in the halls using slurs or "gay" and other words associated with LGBTQ+ people as putdowns or insults.
- Ask your administrator for the opportunity to attend "Respect for All" training to help promote respect for diversity and prevent bullying, intimidation, and bias-based harassment in your school.
- Speak to other teachers about being allies for LGBTQ+ staff and students.
- Post safe space posters and LGBTQ+ materials, and talk to your students about why your classroom is a safe space free from harassment, bias, and violence.
- Support GSAs, chaperone events to ensure they're LGBTQ+ affirming, and help LGBTQ+ students and staff advocate for fair school policies.

### If you're an administrator or guidance counselor:

- Reach out to both parents and students to help make them aware that peers may be struggling with sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Meet with teachers and parents to help them learn about the issues that their students, children, or their children's peers may face as LGBTQ+ youth.
- Make sure your library, school healthcare workers, and health teachers include accurate information about gender identity, sexual orientation, and health.
- Let students know that your office is open to them should they need support speaking about bullying, violence, harassment, or conflict at home.
- Understand the NYC Public Schools resources that can help you create a school that is supportive of LGBTQ+ students, including [Guidelines to Support Transgender and Gender Expansive Students](#), [Guidelines on Gender Inclusion](#), the ["Respect for All" program](#), [LGBTQ+ Supports for NYC Schools](#), and the [Chancellor's Regulation on Bias-Related Harassment and Bullying](#).

