



Space Matters: Creating a Safe & Affirming Space for LGBTQ+ Students

NSLDHH 2017
Bethany Gehman
www.bethanygehman.com

A key role of an **ALLY** is to use the power and influence you have as a staff to advocate for the rights of **ALL** students and ensure safe schools for **ALL**.

You can advocate for:

- Assessment of your school's climate, policies, and practices.
- Implementation of comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policies.
- Promotion of non-discriminatory policies and practices

LGBT-Inclusive School Checklist

Policies & Procedures

- Fairly enforced non-discrimination and anti-bullying/harassment policies that explicitly protect LGBTQ+ students.
- School forms and applications that are inclusive of all identities and family structures.
- A gender-neutral dress code, including for yearbook photos.
- All-gender and/or private bathroom and changing areas.

School Events & Celebrations

- School dances and proms that are safe for and inclusive of LGBTQ+ students.
- Proms, homecoming, and athletic events that allow for gender-neutral alternatives to "King" and "Queen".
- Valentine's Day celebrations inclusive of LGBTQ+ and non-coupled students.
- Observations of Mother's Day and Father's Day that affirm all family structures.

Curriculum Content

- Health and sexuality education that is inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- Regularly includes information about LGBTQ+ people, history, and events.
- Library resources and displays that are inclusive of LGBTQ+ people, history, and issues.

Co-Curricular Activities

- Athletic teams and events that are safe for and inclusive of LGBTQ+ students.
- GSA's and other student clubs that combat name-calling, bullying, and harassment.
- School publications that cover LGBTQ+ people and issues.

Adapted from GLSEN's Safe Space Kit, 2016

Make Your Action Plan

Now that you have learned how to be an effective ally to LGBT+ students, it's time you make your plan of action. By making realistic goals and documenting them, you will be more likely to make the change you seek. Use the questions provided to specify your next steps.

1. What can I do to support LGBTQ+ students?
2. What can I do to educate students and Student Life staff?
3. What can I do to advocate for changes within the school?
4. What further resources, information, or help do I need?

