



Ways to Be an Ally*
*In honor of the victims
of the Orlando tragedy
June 12, 2016*



Be an ally to all LGBTQ individuals (general)

1. Be visible in your role as an ally.
2. Listen openly to the voices of LGBTQ individuals.
3. Educate yourself about issues facing LGBTQ people.
4. Use inclusive language like “partner” and avoid using gendered pronouns when not known.
5. Provide correct information when you hear myths or misperceptions about LGBTQ people.
6. Learn about the coming out process, appreciate that it is not a one-time event, and understand that it is different for each person in each context.
7. Don't make assumptions about a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.
8. Recognize and interrupt heteronormative and cisnormative assumptions.
9. Intervene when you hear anti-LGBTQ language or remarks.
10. Don't disclose others' identities unless you have their permission.
11. Despite good intentions, you'll make mistakes as an ally. Apologize when you do.

Be an ally to students / in the classroom / on campus

12. Display a Safe Zone sticker.
13. Add an LGBTQ-inclusive diversity statement to your course syllabus.
14. Use students' preferred names, even if your institution does not yet have a preferred name policy in place.
15. Ask and use students' gender pronouns.
16. Include LGBTQ identity in discussions of diversity.
17. Do assume that closeted people are in your hallways, classrooms, clubs and department and are wondering how safe the environment is.
18. Disrupt microaggressions and homophobic jokes in the classroom.
19. Know the available resources for LGBTQ students and be ready to share them ((e.g., have a handout available)
20. Create opportunities for student STEM clubs to talk about diversity.
21. Discuss diversity in a STEM class.
22. Facilitate a discussion at an LGBTQ student organization meeting on campus.
23. Include examples of LGBTQ contributions to STEM fields, or encourage students to help you find them.
24. Volunteer to advise an LGBTQ student group.
25. If you advise a non-LGBTQ student group, encourage group to cosponsor events with LGBTQ groups.
26. Attend LGBTQ events and celebrations on campus. If it's not the norm for faculty/staff to attend, your presence will really be appreciated.
27. Discuss LGBTQ-related campus, community, and national events.
28. Partner with women/gender study departments to host events.
29. Check in with LGBTQ students before school holidays. This can be a stressful time because some students are going to homes that are not welcoming of their LGBTQ identity – or they may not going home at all.
30. Disseminate information about oSTEM, NOGLSTP, and other LGBTQ organizations.
31. Ask for gender-inclusive restrooms on campus and in your building.

* The awareness and skills that you develop as you become an ally to LGBTQ individuals will help you support other marginalized groups, too.

Be an ally to colleagues / in the workplace & extended workplace

32. Wear your rainbow ribbon at conferences.
33. Know your institution's policies and benefits for LGBTQ employees and how they are or are not inclusive for LGBTQ employees and their families.
34. Join or organize an employee resource group (ERG).
35. Recognize your (heterosexual or cisgender) privilege and use it to make your workplace more LGBTQ-inclusive.
36. Respond appropriately to microaggressions: "What do you mean by that?" "Could you explain what you mean?" "What I heard from you just now was this, but it might be better to say this." "How did you come to that point of view?"
37. Advocate for an LGBTQ+ specific non-discrimination policy (possibly through employee resource group).
38. Network with other allies, especially senior managers and HR (particularly important in crisis/emergency situation).
39. Learn what other institutions are doing to promote LGBTQ inclusion.
40. Learn about LGBTQ employee experiences at your institution, positive and negative.
41. Encourage your institution to include sexual orientation and gender identity on climate surveys (in addition to other race/ethnicity).
42. Invite LGBTQ colleagues' partners or spouses to work-social events.
43. Become a career mentor to an LGBTQ colleague.
44. When inviting colleagues to bring a guest to an event, use inclusive language (don't assume opposite sex partners)..
45. Learn about and use examples of prominent LGBTQ role models in STEM professions.

Be an ally in the presence of Family and Friends

46. Gently correct anti-LGBTQ comments and jokes... "You would not say that in front of _____".
47. Keep in mind the principle of charity when interpreting biased statements. Try not to assume intent, but address impact.
48. When children ask about LGBTQ couples, provide short, clear and affirming answers. Open discussions at an early age can help promote lifelong acceptance.
49. Invite LGBTQ couples to social or family events.

* The awareness and skills that you develop as you become an ally to LGBTQ individuals will help you support other marginalized groups, too.

Responding to Bias

Responding to microaggressions and bias is one of the most important things you can do as an ally, yet it can be one of the most awkward and uncomfortable. Rest assured, most people have experienced that feeling of “freezing” in the moment. Your response does not have to be perfect, just authentic. It can be helpful to prepare your responses so you can address microaggressions and bias with confidence. The two resources below will help.

Allies and Microaggressions by Kerry Ann Rockquemore, Inside Higher Ed,
<https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2016/04/13/how-be-ally-someone-experiencing-microaggressions-essay>

Speak up: Responding to Everyday Bigotry, The Southern Poverty Law Center
<https://www.splcenter.org/20150126/speak-responding-everyday-bigotry>