

ACTIONS FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS

Navigating the twin pandemics of COVID-19, with its increased isolation and uncertainty, along with the national outcries against anti-Blackness and police brutality since June, we look to this moment in history as a signal for change and hope.

As an educator, here are 10 actions you can take to organize a NNCW program at your school and to ensure that LGBTQ+ students across the country are **#SafeToBe** themselves in school and in our country:

1. **[Take the NNCW Pledge!](#)** Share the pledge link with your students and colleagues to make sure that everyone has access to GLSEN resources, free streaming, and live events!
2. **Take 30 minutes for Free Professional Development!** GLSEN is offering [free 30 Min. evidence-based, virtual Professional Development for educators](#), which focuses on better preparing us to intervene in anti-LGBTQ comments and harassment, to educators who take the NNCW Pledge. Engage with a virtual classroom to practice the skills you need to better intervene in support of your LGBTQ+ students, and to create a more respectful learning environment for all.
3. **Join GLSEN's Story Time!** Reading books with LGBTQ+ and gender diverse characters can encourage students to engage in discussions around respect and action. During NNCW, GLSEN will share video recordings of LGBTQ+ picture book readings.
 - a. This year we will feature a special reading of "I am Jazz" by Jazz Jennings, complete with discussion questions! You can use [GLSEN's Elementary Lessons](#) and Welcoming Schools' [guide](#) to continue the conversation.
 - b. Invite your families to tune in with you to listen to the story, and to engage in the discussion questions to make sure this Story Time helps students to deepen their understanding of LGBTQ+ people and families, and ways to feel safe and respected. Follow [@GLSEN_Education](#) on twitter for more information.
4. **Check Out Our Website!** GLSEN has a menu of possibilities for creating the most effective NNCW for your school at www.glsen.org/nncw. Besides lessons, you will also find ideas for school-wide activities on the site. As you set new goals and objectives each year, you will probably find reasons to modify your school's NNCW celebration. Choose activities that relate to your goals and objectives and that resonate most with your students' needs.
5. **Teach LGBTQ+-Inclusive Lessons.** Bringing in positive representations of LGBTQ+ people, issues, and history into your practice is a valuable support throughout the year. Reading books with LGBTQ+ and gender diverse characters can encourage students to engage in discussions around respect and advocacy. You can find recommended Book Lists and an Inclusive

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Curriculum Reflection Guide on our [Inclusive Curriculum](#) page. Ask students to reflect on the power of words and to brainstorm how they could help the characters in the book feel more safe, seen, and celebrated at school.

6. **Facilitate LGBTQ+ No Name-Calling Week discussions.** Dedicate some time during No Name-Calling Week to discuss LGBTQ+ people and identities, the power of words, and the importance of intervening in bullying or harassment. Engage your students in discussion using the following prompts:
 - For a discussion group check out these questions:
 - What do the letters LGBTQ+ stand for?
 - What names, pronouns, or identifiers/descriptors feel good to you right now? If you are comfortable with sharing, what do you wish people knew about how you navigate all of your identities?
 - Have you ever been teased for how you look/dress, what you're playing with, or who is in your family?
 - When you are navigating a situation and need support, such as people calling you the wrong names, pronouns, or using words that feel harmful, what do you need to feel safe again? Who do you feel safe talking to inside and outside of school?
 - What can we do together to create change for our school so that everyone feels #SafeToBe?

7. **Host or join a virtual Event!** Use this resource for [Hosting a Virtual Event](#) and find more virtual resources [on our website](#). Follow @GLSEN on Facebook and Instagram for ways to participate and virtual events to join during the week.

8. **Use Our Planning Resource:** [Use GLSEN's Annual Planner for a day-by-day plan for your week](#). Make a plan for the week to share with colleagues and administrators, and connect with colleagues to find out what lessons and activities they're choosing to teach this NNCW.

9. **Plan a Whole School Celebration:** We encourage you to talk to your administrators to include school-wide activities such as assemblies, playground games (such as the one used in the NNCW Physical Education lesson "Blowing the Whistle on Name-Calling"), or creation of hallway or lunchroom displays of student slogans, writing and artwork. As visual reminders and sources of individual and collective pride, these kinds of activities can help promote the kind of climate you may be seeking to develop. *During online schools, you can host a virtual Open Mic, or encourage students to create visual art that is streamed in a powerpoint presentation during a virtual assembly.*

10. Continue the Conversation: As with any learning activity, it is important to provide closure so that students can attach personal meaning and relevance to what they have learned. It is also important for you and your colleagues to take a moment to recognize the important work in which you have engaged and articulate what you learned from your students and your own engagement with them around these issues. Survey your students and if applicable, your GSA, in a closing discussion with reflections from the week, and to get their input how the school can continue this work throughout the year. After receiving feedback from the students, think about and discuss the following questions with your colleagues and administrators:

- What did you notice about your students as they engaged in this learning?
- Are there skills that need to be further reinforced or developed?
- What can you bring forth from the week and do more regularly