

## Middle and High School

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about GLSEN's No Name-Calling Week and how you, as an educator, can participate!

### WHAT IS NO NAME-CALLING WEEK?

GLSEN's [No Name-Calling Week, \(NNCW\)](#) is a week organized by K-12 educators and students to end name-calling and bullying in schools. This week shares tools and resources for disrupting anti-LGBTQ+ harassment and bias-based bullying, and invites LGBTQ+ students into activating the power of self-determination.

This year NNCW will be January 18-22th, 2021, and the week coincides with the inauguration of Joe Biden as the next president of the United States. 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, you can organize a NNCW program at your school to ensure that LGBTQ+ students across the country are **#SafeToBe** themselves in school and in our country.

In this guide you will find:

- Update for Participation in Online Schools
- FAQ about NNWC Week and GLSEN
- No Name-Calling Week Planning
- Letter to administrators for participation
- Newsletter or email announcement to families
- Actions for Educators

### UPDATE FOR PARTICIPATION IN ONLINE SCHOOLS

Even if you are not meeting with your students in person, you can help them to organize a No Name-Calling Week for your school, and you can bring No Name-Calling Week activities into your teaching. Use this resource for [Hosting a Virtual Event](#) and find more virtual resources [on our website](#). Follow @GLSEN on Facebook and Instagram for ways for you and your students to participate and virtual events to join during the week. You can even use this as an opportunity to collaborate with other GSAs outside of your school, or to invite students from multiple schools to work together to organize #safetoBE events that any student can attend.

## NO NAME-CALLING WEEK AND GLSEN FAQ

### Who started NNCW?

No Name-Calling Week was inspired by a young adult novel entitled "The Misfits" by popular author, James Howe. Motivated by this simple, yet powerful, idea, GLSEN and Simon & Schuster Children's publishing, consisting of over 40 national partner organizations, organized an actual No Name-Calling Week in schools across the nation in 2004. GLSEN continues the No Name-Calling Week program every year to focus national attention on the problem of name-calling and bias-based bullying in schools, and to provide students and educators with the tools and inspiration to launch an ongoing dialogue about ways to eliminate name-calling in their communities.

### What is GLSEN?

GLSEN is the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students. Established nationally in 1990, GLSEN envisions a world in which every child learns to respect and accept all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Find our resources and more information at [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org).

### Why should Schools Celebrate No Name-Calling Week?

There are a variety of reasons why educators make the decision to organize and implement a No Name-Calling Week (NNCW) in their school. Some see NNCW as an opportunity for a midpoint of the school year reminder for students about expectations for respectful behaviors while others utilize the week to build upon school-wide efforts to create a yearlong climate of respect and LGBTQ+ inclusion. With a focus on self-identity, determination, and affirmation, it can also be a helpful mid-year check-in on names, pronouns, and identity makers that empower students. NNCW is also an effective overall strategy for addressing specific school-based issues related to LGBTQ+ support. In order to gain the maximum benefits of NNCW It is important for you as educators to recognize the intent you have for organizing the week in their school.

### Why focus on name-calling?

[GLSEN's National School Climate](#) continues to highlight the prevalence of biased language, name-calling, and bullying in U.S. schools. In addition:

- Almost all LGBTQ students (98.8%) heard "gay" used in a negative way at school (e.g. that's so gay"), and 91.8% reported that they felt distressed because of this language.
- 95.2% of LGBTQ students heard other types of homophobic remarks and 91.8% heard negative remarks about gender expression

Unfortunately, 60.5% of LGBTQ students who reported victimization said that school staff did nothing in response or told the student to ignore it ([GLSEN 2019](#)). Additionally, GLSEN’s research shows that more needs to be done to ensure that [LGBTQ+ youth of color, undocumented LGBTQ+ students, and trans and nonbinary students](#) feel safe to be themselves at school. You can find more research and resources for supporting LGBTQ+ Black, Latinx, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Native and Indigenous youth for your advocacy on our website.

### What objectives should you have for NNCW?

Once you have critically examined your own school, consider what you want students to learn and the skill building you want to provide for them so that they apply these to their everyday interactions with peers, teachers and others in the school setting. Consider all students in your goals, not just those for whom you may have concerns. Goals might include:

- Incidents of name-calling will decrease
- Students will engage in intervention behaviors in name-calling incidents.
- Students will understand that they have a right to report bias-based bullying behavior, understand the process for reporting, and have input on the follow up actions.

Setting specific objectives will help you choose the most appropriate activities for your NNCW. These might include:

- Students will identify ways that words can be used to hurt others.
- Students will identify words and descriptors that feel good to them, and better understand the power of words to connect and build community.
- Students will apply “[safe](#)” strategies to incidents of name-calling and bias-based bullying.

### Who should participate in NNCW?

No Name-calling Week is for everyone, and it works best when it is a whole-community effort, led by administrators, taught by teachers and student leaders, with invitations for families to join in ending name-calling and bias-based bullying. It is important that students see you and all of the adults in the school community as active participants in creating a climate of respect and focused on LGBTQ+ student safety. As with any learning opportunity, observing your students as they engage in NNCW activities and working with them to design the week, can help you assess their understanding, redirect your instruction as needed and respond to questions so that the lessons learned and skills developed during NNCW can be applied all year long. At this critical time in our country, it’s more important than ever for the entire school community to engage in making sure all LGBTQ+ students, especially those holding multiple marginalized identities, feel seen, supported, and **#safetoBE** themselves.

**PLANNING FOR NO NAME-CALLING WEEK**

1. **Collaborate!** Begin the planning process by engaging your colleagues in conversations to share observations of student behaviors and language and student attitudes around difference while identifying school practices that may promote these (either positively or negatively), or that may fail to address them. If you have a GSA or LGBTQ+ club with students, faculty, and/or families, connect with them to see if anyone is interested in co-planning with you.
  
2. **Adapt it for your school:** What concerns exist in your school around issues of name-calling, bullying, and bias? No Name-Calling Week is most impactful when your activities and discussions are connected to your school’s culture. Consider answering the following questions:
  - a. What types of harmful language do we hear students or educators use in your school?
  - b. What do educators in our school do when students use such harmful language?
  - c. How can educators in our school use such moments as opportunities for learning?
  - d. Do students know what to do when such moments take place?
  - e. Do students in our school know about and apply intervention behaviors when others are called names?
  - f. Are students being taught about their identities and words that they want to use to describe themselves?
  - g. Are students being supported in choosing their own names and pronouns, and are those decisions being respected?
  - h. In what ways do we model respectful behaviors and language for students?
  
3. **Survey your school:** Ask your students some of the questions posted above to better shape your NNCW program plan. Additionally, consider using GLSEN’s Local School Climate Survey found at [www.glsen.org/lscs](http://www.glsen.org/lscs) can provide additional data for you and your colleagues to use as you develop your plan. The survey is also a great way to bring your own statistics to your administrators and families in your rationale for the week. Once you have a better understanding of the needs at your school, use GLSEN’s planning resources and ways to participate during the week to address them and meet your objectives.
  
4. **Support your students’ organizing efforts!** If your school has a GSA, attend a meeting to support No Name-Calling Week organizing. Offer to take on tasks and help students with their efforts, especially regarding advocacy with administration or organizing faculty presentations or whole-school assemblies. Work with other educators to secure space and time for students to share No Name-Calling Week information.

During the week, support students in discussing names, identities, and ways that they feel safe to be themselves. In some instances, students' peers could respond with disrespect, name-calling, or harassment. Use these as teachable moments to model support for LGBTQ+ people by intervening and insisting that your school be a safe space for all. For more support with intervention techniques, see our [Safe Space Kit](#).

5. **Share NNCW Week with colleagues and administrators.** No Name-Calling Week is most effective as a school-wide initiative to begin the new year with LGBTQ+ visibility and affirmation. Provide your colleagues with this Educators' Guide, information about GLSEN's Safe Space Kit and discuss with them the need for LGBTQ+ supports in your school. Use the "Engage School Staff" section of the [Safe Space Kit](#) for more details on staff presentations. Having knowledge of your school's policies and procedures, you can offer suggestions on how your school as a whole can develop effective activities that bring LGBTQ+ visibility into your school in a positive way.
  
6. **Connect with GLSEN and other educators like you.** If you are LGBTQ+ or the only supportive advocate in your school, it can feel daunting to bring in days of action like No Name-Calling Week. Remember that you are not alone! There are thousands of educators across the country who are celebrating No Name-Calling Week and having these conversations with their administrators. [To help plan your week, connect with other educators to ask questions, share ideas, and get support if needed.](#)
  
7. **Engage the Family Community.** NNCW is a great time to demonstrate your school's commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion and building a climate of respect for the entire school community. Consider inviting families to some of GLSEN's virtual events, creating a family-facing panel of students who want to share what the need to feel #safetoBE, or hosting an evening screening of one of the free and available films we offer for registrants. Administrators can also send a letter to families to explain why the school is celebrating No Name-Calling Week and advocating for inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community through the year.

## LETTER TO ADMINISTRATION FOR PARTICIPATION

[This letter template](#) can be adapted to send to administrators or other school leaders to let them know about No Name-Calling week. If you are supporting a GSA or students who want to bring this week to the school, be sure to connect with them first. If you have families or colleagues who would also like to celebrate No Name-Calling Week, ask if they are willing to have this letter be sent from you all.

## **NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENT TO FAMILIES**

NNCW is a great time to demonstrate your school's commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion and building a climate of respect for the entire school community, including families! [This letter template](#) can be adapted to send to families to let them know about No Name-Calling week. If possible, it's best to have this letter be sent from administration or to be included in regular family newsletters or updates from the school.

## **NO NAME-CALLING WEEK ACTIONS FOR EDUCATORS**

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!

*It is important to note that not every school will do NNCW the same way, and not everyone can celebrate NNCW at the same time. Be sure to choose an annual time that works best for your school, as our resources are available throughout the year.*

**Thank you for your commitment to creating safer, more affirming schools  
for all LGBTQ+ youth!**

**Email us at [educators@glsen.org](mailto:educators@glsen.org) for questions or if you want to share some  
ideas for No Name-Calling Week!**