

ALLYSHIP IN ACTION



OVERVIEW

Facilitating an Allyship in Action training is a great way to encourage people to take action and make schools safer for LGBTQ students. Use this guide to help you facilitate your own training to engage participants in activities that will get them thinking critically about further actions they can take as allies.



OBJECTIVES

To provide understanding about what allyship in action is.
To increase the belief of why allyship is important.
To encourage effective allyship in action in schools.



THINGS TO PREP & TOOLS NEEDED

Print [GLSEN Ally Week blogs](http://www.glsen.org/allyweek) (www.glsen.org/allyweek), flip chart paper, a written flip chart paper with allyship definition written on it, stats from [GLSEN's National School Climate Survey](#) or [State Snapshots](#), markers, paper, pens.



FACILITATOR NOTES

Know your audience (adults vs students). That way you know which framing might be more effective to use.

Define terminology. Make sure to let people know that they can ask for definitions if they don't know them. Try not to use acronyms throughout the presentation.

Have a supportive adult present during the presentation. That way if you need adult allyship, that they are there to help you and validate what you are educating people on.

Get support from your administration. Try to get permission to do your presentation beforehand so that if there is pushback you have administration support.

In the activity below, **the parts in italics are directions, actions or notes. The parts in bold are to be read to the group.** You don't have to read these words verbatim, but these are examples of how the facilitator might speak to the group.



TIME

60 minutes.

Subject	Time	Facilitated by
Introduction	5 minutes	
Defining Allyship	5 minutes	
Why Allyship is needed	10 minutes	
Action Plan	20 minutes	
Present Backs	15 minutes	
Closing	5 minutes	

ALL ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

1. (5 minutes) Opening: *Introductions help participants to get to know each other and feel welcome in the space.*

“Hello everyone! Welcome to the Allyship in Action training. We are so excited to have all of you here. Today, we are going to learn about how we can use our experiences to put allyship in action to support LGBTQ students with various identities in our school and community. Now, let’s get started with introductions. Let’s go around the room and say your name, pronouns, and one word to describe how you are feeling to be at this training right now. For those who are new to introducing pronouns, this is how you would like others to refer to you, such as she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/theirs, and many others. For example, ‘My name is _____ and I use _____ pronouns.’”

The facilitator should begin and then have the group continue clockwise around the room. This activity should go quickly with each participant answering in only a few words. The facilitator should encourage people to be brief if participants begin to give longer answers. For more information about the importance of pronoun visibility, see GLSEN’s [Pronoun Resource](#).

2. (5 minutes) Defining Allyship: *Begin by having the group read off the definitions that you have written on flip-chart paper. This can be done popcorn style, with volunteers around the room.*

Thank you for introducing yourselves! First, we are going to read through the definitions of allyship so that we can all be on the same page on what it is and how it impacts our school. Can I have a volunteer read of the definitions?

Allyship Defined: Allyship is when an individual speaks out and advocates for a person or group that is often targeted and discriminated against. Allyship works to interrupt and end oppression by supporting and advocating for people who are stigmatized, discriminated against or treated unfairly either proactively, reactively, or both.

Allyship in Practice: For lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities, allyship in action is when someone supports and advocates for the rights of LGBTQ people. Allyship is important throughout the movement, for folks to utilize their privilege to demand the safety of those that are experiencing oppression. Anyone can work in allyship by working towards improving school climate and advocating in conversations where someone might not feel safe to out themselves or be visible. Allyship can also exist within the LGBTQ community. Each person within the LGBTQ community not only hold LGBTQ identities, they may also be people of color, people with disabilities, immigrants, and people experiencing homelessness. Using your privilege as an ally of any group can help move conversations forward and create action around how different LGBTQ students are able to show up as their authentic selves and safely in school.

3. (10 minutes) Why Allyship is Needed: *Begin by introducing two statistics below and those that you collected for the presentation. Utilize the [National School Climate Survey](#) for further statistics. If you want to get really specific to the state you are in, check to see if your state has a [State Snapshot](#). After sharing the statistics with the group ask the reflection question.*

Thank you for reading those definitions. Now we're going to talk about why allyship is needed across the U.S school system. I'm going to read a series of facts from GLSEN's National School Climate survey to give a picture of LGBTQ experiences in schools.

- **Nearly 9 in 10 LGBTQ students were harassed or assaulted at school. Sexual orientation and gender expression were the most commonly targeted characteristics.**
- **Students who experienced high levels of harassment and assault had poorer educational outcomes and lower psychological well-being.**

Reflection: **Based on the statistics why do you think allyship is needed in this school?**

4. (20 minutes) Action Plan: **Right now, we are going to split up into groups to read through blogs written by students around what allyship looks like to them. Each group will read through the blog and identify the action steps that the students identified in their piece. Then your group will take the flip chart paper and design an action plan to visually describe how you would put the action steps into place at school. When we come back as a large group each group will have 2 minutes to present your artwork and explain what you've discussed.**

Split the group into 3-5 and hand out a pre-printed blog to each of the groups. Find the allyship blogs on the [GLSEN Ally Week](#) landing page. Each group gets a flip chart paper to sketch on.

5. (10 minutes) Present backs: *Bring the group back together and let them know that they each have 2 minutes to present their action steps on their flipchart paper back to the larger group.*
6. (5 minutes) Debrief: *After the present backs finish, thank the groups for presenting. Ask the group the reflection question and tell them to turn to a partner that's close to them to share.*

Reflection: **What is something that you learned in the training? Share with a partner close to you.**

7. (5 minutes) Closing: **Thank you all for presenting and sharing your thoughts on how you are going to put allyship into action and make schools a safer place. Before we leave I would like you to write down one action step that you are going to take after leaving this training to make our school a safer place for LGBTQ students. After writing the action step down we'll go around in a quick circle and share.**

Go around in a quick circle and have everyone share what they wrote. If you have a larger group, or are running out of time, have them share their action item to a neighbor.

Thank you for coming! We are excited to work with you more on making the school safer together.

DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN THIS ACTIVITY? TELL US HOW IT WENT AND WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER!
EMAIL US AT **STUDENTS@GLSEN.ORG** OR **EDUCATORS@GLSEN.ORG**.