

# Introduction to Understanding the Rights of LGBT Students

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## Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

- ✓ identify and analyze your own belief system
- ✓ familiarize yourself with a glossary of terms as they relate to LGBT students
- ✓ describe what an ally is and how you can become one
- ✓ define your role as an ally
- ✓ list common struggles LGBT students face
- ✓ learn how to create a safe space



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## Introduction

Educators have a unique and powerful ability to impact a student's life in a positive way. In addition to delivering quality education to students, understanding the needs and rights of LGBT students is critical.

Many LGBT students report coming out to a trusted adult who made them feel comfortable and safe. Teachers can take on this role, as well as preventing bullying and reducing depression and anxiety in LGBT students. Teachers are in the ideal role to become not just allies, but also advocates for LGBT students, as well as models for all students and staff.

In the following lessons, educators will learn how to create a safe and supportive environment for LGBT students.



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### Progression of the LGBT Movement in the United States

To better understand the LGBT community as a whole, let's look at the history of the movement in the U.S.

December of 1924

1940s

1950s

June 28, 1969

The early 2000s

In Chicago Illinois, Henry Gerber formed the first organization with a primary focus on gay rights, the Society for Human Rights. After being chartered by the state of Illinois and publishing the first publication for homosexuals, the organization dissolves due to political pressure.

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## Progression of the LGBT Movement in the United States

To better understand the LGBT community as a whole, let's look at the history of the movement in the U.S.

December of 1924

1940s

1950s

June 28, 1969

The early 2000s

At this time, homosexuality was considered an illness, and even heterosexuality was not openly discussed. Alfred Kinsey, a researcher and biologist, published a study concluding that nearly 40% of men who considered themselves heterosexual, had experienced a homosexual encounter at least once. This research helped begin a slight shift in public perception of homosexuality.



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### Progression of the LGBT Movement in the United States

To better understand the LGBT community as a whole, let's look at the history of the movement in the U.S.

December of 1924

1940s

1950s

June 28, 1969

The early 2000s

In the early 1950s, progress stalled and President Eisenhower signs bills into law banning all homosexuals from working for the federal government. In its first publication of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the American Psychiatric Association lists homosexuality as a "personality disturbance." The manual, The Standard for the Psychiatric Community, is quickly criticized for the categorization.

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### Progression of the LGBT Movement in the United States

To better understand the LGBT community as a whole, let's look at the history of the movement in the U.S.

December of 1924

1940s

1950s

June 28, 1969

The early 2000s

A group of young LGBT youth started a riot after police raided a known gay bar in Greenwich Village in New York City. The riot drew thousands of protesters and lasted three days. It was the beginning of the modern LGBT movement.

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## Progression of the LGBT Movement in the United States

To better understand the LGBT community as a whole, let's look at the history of the movement in the U.S.

December of 1924    1940s    1950s    June 28, 1969    The early 2000s

Since the beginning of the 2000s, gay rights have continued to gain momentum. In 2004, Massachusetts becomes the first state to legalize gay marriage.

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## Study Exercise



Click on the choice that best answers the following question.

In which decade did the American Psychiatric Association list homosexuality as a "personal disturbance" in its Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders?

A) 1920s

B) 1940s

C) 1950s

D) 2000s

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Correct!

The 1950s is when the American Psychiatric Association made the widely criticized decision to list homosexuality as a "personal disturbance."

Click "Continue" to advance to the next lesson.

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### Assessing Your Beliefs So You Can Be An Ally

What is an ally? The widely acceptable definition is: a member of the majority or dominant group who works to end oppression by recognizing their own privilege and supporting or advocating for the oppressed population.

For example, a straight person who supports and stands up for the equality of LGBT people. As an educator, it is important that you support all students on their educational journey. Education is not just obtained from the classroom but also from the emotional bonds a student creates with other students, teachers, and administrators along the course of their development.



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### Assessing Your Beliefs So You Can Be An Ally

During childhood, we begin to develop a set of beliefs, morals, and values based on the views of our primary caregivers. As infants, we are free of prejudice and judgment. We learn to stereotype and judge other individuals based upon the set of beliefs we are exposed to or learn over time.

If your parents or caregivers are Christian then you may learn about the practices of Christianity. Or if they eat vegetarian then you also may not eat meat as a child or young adult. Throughout childhood and adolescence our opinions and beliefs are often closely aligned with our primary caregivers. Your parents' perceptions and opinions may have been based in part on their parents' experiences and firmly held beliefs.

As adults, we have the ability to analyze our beliefs and judgments and work on shifting those beliefs if we so desire. In order to fully support students, it is important to access your own beliefs, specifically relating to the area of LGBT students. Anti-LGBT bias is everywhere. Name-calling, jokes, and exclusion are just a few of the not-so-subtle biases. Identifying your own, potential Anti-LGBT bias is the first step to becoming an ally.



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### Assessing Your Beliefs So You Can Be An Ally

The following questions should inspire you to think about your own beliefs, identify if those beliefs are still important to you, and contemplate if a shift in your beliefs is necessary in order to provide a safe, supportive environment for LGBT students. There are no right or wrong answers. They are simply intended to be thought provoking.

1

2 3 4 5

Have you ever used the words "gay, lesbian, queer," or other words in a derogatory way?

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### Assessing Your Beliefs So You Can Be An Ally

The following questions should inspire you to think about your own beliefs, identify if those beliefs are still important to you, and contemplate if a shift in your beliefs is necessary in order to provide a safe, supportive environment for LGBT students. There are no right or wrong answers. They are simply intended to be thought provoking.

1

2

3

4

5

Have you ever told or laughed at a joke about LGBT people?

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### Assessing Your Beliefs So You Can Be An Ally

The following questions should inspire you to think about your own beliefs, identify if those beliefs are still important to you, and contemplate if a shift in your beliefs is necessary in order to provide a safe, supportive environment for LGBT students. There are no right or wrong answers. They are simply intended to be thought provoking.

1 2 **3** 4 5

How would you feel if your mom, dad, sibling, or friend told you they were gay?

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### Assessing Your Beliefs So You Can Be An Ally

The following questions should inspire you to think about your own beliefs, identify if those beliefs are still important to you, and contemplate if a shift in your beliefs is necessary in order to provide a safe, supportive environment for LGBT students. There are no right or wrong answers. They are simply intended to be thought provoking.

1 2 3 4 5

Can you name more than three prominent people who are LGBT?

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### Assessing Your Beliefs So You Can Be An Ally

The following questions should inspire you to think about your own beliefs, identify if those beliefs are still important to you, and contemplate if a shift in your beliefs is necessary in order to provide a safe, supportive environment for LGBT students. There are no right or wrong answers. They are simply intended to be thought provoking.

1 2 3 4 **5**

Do you know anyone who is transgender?

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## Study Exercise



Click on the choice that best answers the following question.

Which of the following terms refers to a member of the majority or dominant group who works to end oppression by recognizing their own privilege and supporting or advocating for the oppressed population?

A) Heterosexual

B) Advocate

C) Ally

D) Caregiver

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Correct!

Allies use their privilege to support and advocate for the oppressed.

Click "Continue" to advance to the next lesson.

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## Frequently Used Terms

Below is a list of commonly used terms. Look over the list and for each term mark whether you:

1. hear or use the term regularly.
2. need to understand the term more clearly.
3. feel uncomfortable or elicit strong emotion, when you hear the words. These are areas you need to address further.



When you have attempted all, click the Next Button.

	Hear or use regularly	Need to understand more clearly	Make you feel uncomfortable or elicit strong emotion
Ally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bisexual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cisgender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coming Out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LGBTQ	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pansexual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Queer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender Expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heterosexual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Homosexual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Questioning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transgender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asexual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intersex	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lesbian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

Asexual

Bisexual

Cisgender

Coming out

Gay

Gender

Gender Expression

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

A member of the majority or dominant group who works to end oppression by recognizing their own privilege and supporting or advocating for the oppressed population.

Asexual

Bisexual

Cisgender

Coming out

Gay

Gender

Gender Expression



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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

Asexual

A person who does not experience sexual attraction, but may experience other forms of attraction (e.g., intellectual, emotional).

Bisexual

Cisgender

Coming out

Gay

Gender

Gender Expression

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

Asexual

Bisexual

A person who is emotionally and/or physically attracted to two genders.

Cisgender

Coming out

Gay

Gender

Gender Expression

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

Asexual

Bisexual

Cisgender

A person whose gender identity and expression are aligned with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Coming out

Gay

Gender

Gender Expression

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

Asexual

Bisexual

Cisgender

Coming out

The ongoing process that an LGBT person goes through, to recognize their own identity pertaining to sexual orientation and/or gender identity and gender expression, and to be open about them with others.

Gay

Gender

Gender Expression

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

Asexual

Bisexual

Cisgender

Coming out

Gay

A person who is emotionally and/or physically attracted to some members of the same gender. "Gay" should not be used as an umbrella term to refer to all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; the term "LGBT" is more accurate and inclusive.

Gender

Gender Expression

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

Asexual

Bisexual

Cisgender

Coming out

Gay

Gender

A set of cultural identities, expressions and roles, usually feminine or masculine, that are assigned to people, based upon the interpretation. Because gender is a social construction, it is possible to reject or modify the assignment made, and develop something that feels truer and just to oneself.

Gender Expression

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Ally

Asexual

Bisexual

Cisgender

Coming out

Gay

Gender

Gender Expression

The multiple ways (e.g., behaviors, dress) in which a person may choose to communicate gender to oneself and/or to others.

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## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

**Heterosexual (or Straight)**

A person who is emotionally and/or physically attracted to some members of another gender.

**Homosexual**

**Identity**

**Intersex**

**Lesbian**

**LGBT or LGBTQ**

**Pansexual**

**Queer**

**Questioning**

**Sexual orientation**

**Transgender**

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

A person who is emotionally and/or physically attracted to some members of the same gender. Many people prefer the terms "lesbian" or "gay," instead.

Identity

Intersex

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning

Sexual orientation

Transgender

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Identity is how we understand ourselves, what we call ourselves, and often who we connect to and associate with.

Intersex

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning

Sexual orientation

Transgender



## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Intersex

An umbrella term used to describe a variety of conditions in which a person is born with reproductive and/or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to match medical definitions of female or male.

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning

Sexual orientation

Transgender

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Intersex

Lesbian

A person who is female and who is emotionally and/or physically attracted to some other females.

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning

Sexual orientation

Transgender

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Intersex

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

An umbrella term referring to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender. Sometimes the acronym is written as LGBTQ, with the "Q" referring to those who identify as queer and/or questioning. The acronym can also include additional letters, in reference to other identities that do not conform to dominant societal norms about sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning

Sexual orientation

Transgender

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Intersex

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

A person who is emotionally and/or physically attracted to some people, regardless of their gender identity.

Queer

Questioning

Sexual orientation

Transgender

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Intersex

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

Queer

An umbrella term used to describe a sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression that does not conform to dominant societal norms.

Questioning

Sexual orientation

Transgender

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Intersex

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning

A person who is in the process of understanding and exploring what their sexual orientation and/or gender identity and gender expression might be.

Sexual orientation

Transgender

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Intersex

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning

Sexual orientation

The inner feelings of who a person is attracted to emotionally and/or physically, in relation to their own gender identity. Some people may identify as "asexual," "bisexual," "gay," "lesbian," "pansexual," "queer," "straight," and many more.

Transgender

## Frequently Used Terms

This is a partial list of definitions obtained from the Safe Space Kit from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network).<sup>2</sup>

Heterosexual (or Straight)

Homosexual

Identity

Intersex

Lesbian

LGBT or LGBTQ

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning

Sexual orientation

Transgender

A person whose gender identity and/or expression are not aligned with the gender they were assigned at birth. "Transgender" is often used as an umbrella term encompassing a large number of identities related to gender nonconformity.



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## Study Exercise



Click on the choice that best answers the following question.

Which of the following term describes a condition which a person is born with reproductive/sexual organs that do not match the medical definition of male or female?

**A) Bisexual**

**B) Ally**

**C) Transgender**

**D) Intersex**

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Correct!

Intersex is a term for those born with reproductive organs that do not match the medical definition of male/female.

Click "Continue" to advance to the next lesson.

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### How Would You Feel?

Imagine not feeling comfortable in your own body. Being in public is awkward and unfulfilling. When you're alone, being yourself feels uncomfortable, even painful. Your mind and heart are filled with frustration, guilt, and confusion. Everywhere you turn you see people who don't look like you. You feel lost, empty, helpless, wrong, and insecure; you believe you don't fit in.

Maybe you have felt this way. Some people who identify as LGBT or Q feel this way or have felt this way. No one should ever feel uncomfortable in their own skin. This is why being an ally is so important. An ally is a friend, a supporter, someone who recognizes their own privilege, great or small, and advocates for someone who needs support.



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## How Would You Feel?

### Why Become an Ally?

Being an ally is an important role because you have the ability to improve the quality of life an LGBTQ person may experience. Research shows LGBTQ students report greater incidences of bullying, higher rates of depression and anxiety, and greater suicide attempts than other students. An ally can help improve outcomes by simply being open and welcoming to LGBTQ students.



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## How Would You Feel?

### Suicide Among LGBTQ Youth

An ally can have a direct role in preventing suicide in the LGBTQ community. Here are some statistics on LGBTQ youth suicide that help put the severity of the issue into perspective.



LGBTQ youth are four times more likely to commit suicide than their straight peers.

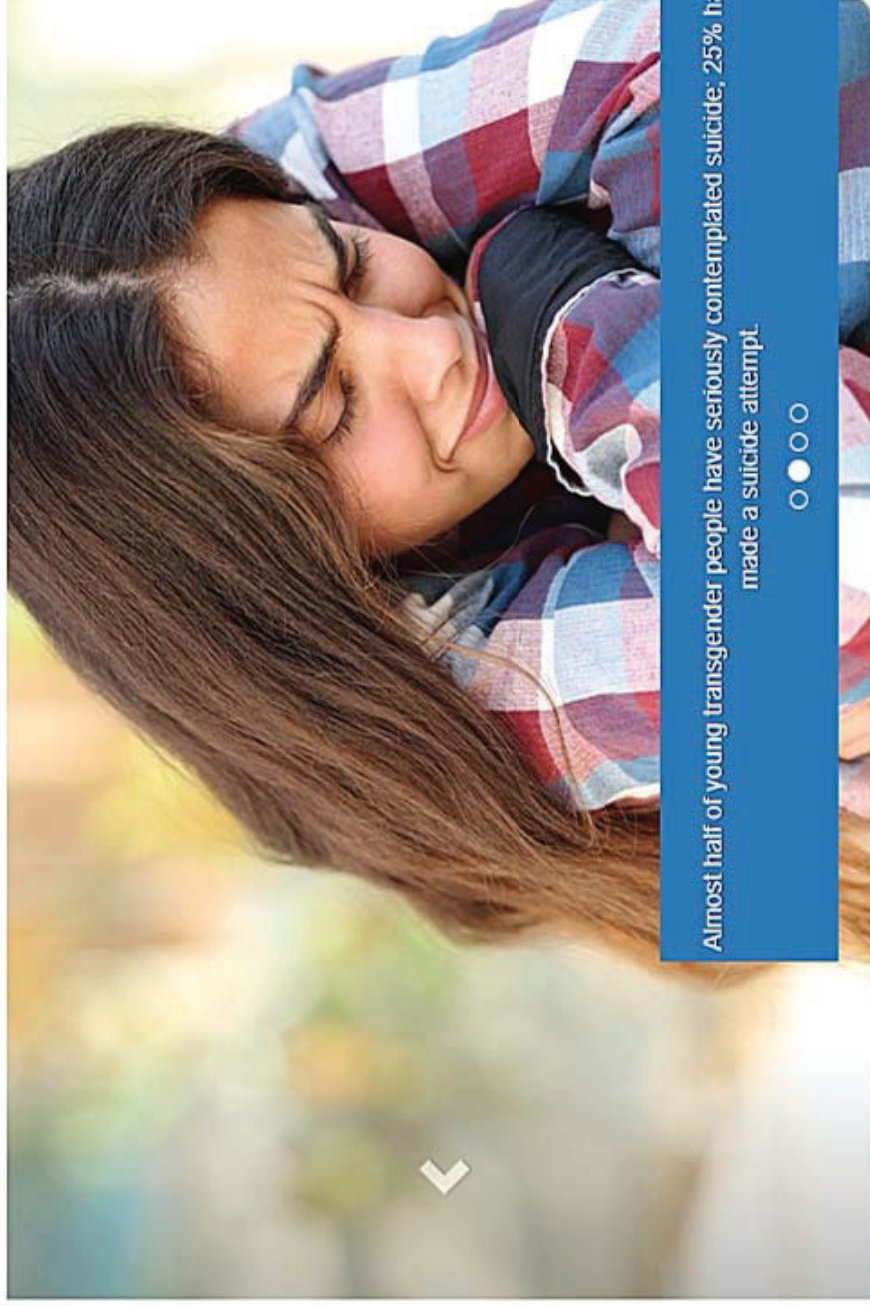


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## How Would You Feel?

### Suicide Among LGBTQ Youth

An ally can have a direct role in preventing suicide in the LGBTQ community. Here are some statistics on LGBTQ youth suicide that help put the severity of the issue into perspective.



Almost half of young transgender people have seriously contemplated suicide; 25% have made a suicide attempt.



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## How Would You Feel?

### Suicide Among LGBTQ Youth

An ally can have a direct role in preventing suicide in the LGBTQ community. Here are some statistics on LGBTQ youth suicide that help put the severity of the issue into perspective.



LGBTQ youth who come from families that are highly rejecting, are more than 8 times more likely to have attempted suicide than their LGBTQ peers whose families give no or low level of rejection.



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# Introduction to Understanding the Rights of LGBT Students

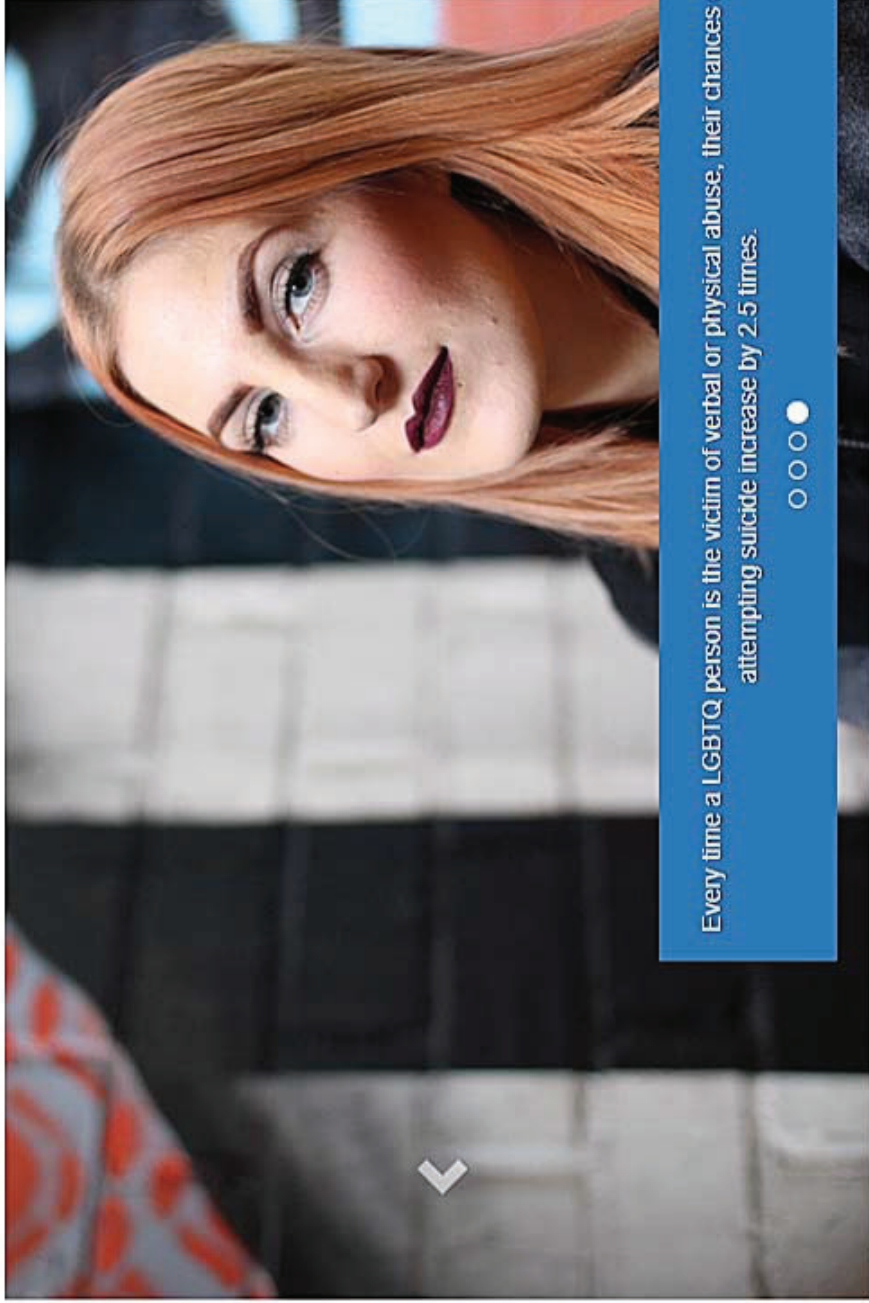
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## How Would You Feel?

### Suicide Among LGBTQ Youth

An ally can have a direct role in preventing suicide in the LGBTQ community. Here are some statistics on LGBTQ youth suicide that help put the severity of the issue into perspective.



Every time a LGBTQ person is the victim of verbal or physical abuse, their chances of attempting suicide increase by 2.5 times.



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## Study Exercise



Click on the choice that best answers the following question.

LGBTQ youth are more likely to attempt suicide than non-LGBTQ youth. How likely are LGBTQ to attempt suicide?

- A) Two times more likely
- B) Six times more likely
- C) Four times more likely
- D) There is no difference.

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Correct!

LGBTQ youth are sadly four times more likely to attempt suicide than their non-LGBTQ peers.

Click "Continue" to advance to the next lesson.

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### Easy Ways to be an Ally

There are four basic requirements to being an ally.

1. Be an active listener.
2. Release judgment.
3. Maintain confidentiality.
4. Be an advocate!

If you are already an educator then you may already possess the requirements of being a great ally.



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### Easy Ways to be an Ally

Being an active listener means talking less and listening more. Perhaps it does not even require talking. To be an ally, you may just need to sit quietly and 'hold space' for the person. This can create an unspoken feeling of safety by simply allowing the person to just BE.

Sometimes relationships take time to develop. They require consistency to establish trust. Creating an environment where students feel comfortable to just be themselves is the first step. This is called a safe space. Creating this space is a necessary first step in acknowledging that some LGBTQ individuals may not be comfortable in the traditional school setting.

To learn more about creating a safe space, visit [GLSEN.org](http://GLSEN.org) and download a FREE Safe Space Kit for your school/classroom. You will learn more about implementing the Safe Space Kit in the last lesson of this course.



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## Study Exercise



Click on the choice that best answers the following question.

Which of the following are the requirements of an ally?

**A)** Active listening

**B)** Talks more than listens

**C)** Willingness to advocate

**D)** Both A and C

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Correct!

Both active listening and a willingness to advocate are essential to being an ally.

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### Dealing With Anti-LGBT Language and Situations

Unfortunately not everyone will be compassionate, open-minded, and understanding when it comes to LGBTQ students. Teachers, administrators, and students are all guilty of using anti-LGBT language.

It takes education and effort to change the language you may be used to using or overlooking. As an ally, it is not enough to just eliminate anti-LGBT language from your vocabulary. You also have to be an advocate and active bystander when you hear others using derogatory language or insults toward LGBTQ individuals. You may be comfortable with this or this may require a bit of practice but it is easily achievable.



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### Dealing With Anti-LGBT Language and Situations

How often have you heard someone say "That's so gay!" Perhaps you have even said those words yourself. Many LGBTQ students report having negative feelings when they hear this word used in school. As an ally you are charged with challenging the person using the word to actually think about what they mean when saying "That's so gay."

If you hear this or other anti-LGBT language you can ask what they mean when they use those words. Often the person using the word "gay" may be attempting to use it as a synonym for bored or lame, which is incorrect and hurtful. Challenge them to use a word that is more specific and appropriate. If the use of the word is to be hurtful then address that by simply saying, "Our school is safe for everyone. Please don't use language that excludes people." This will set an example for not tolerating hurtful words or actions. In addition to that, you automatically create an environment where LGBTQ students feel directly supported.



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### Dealing With Anti-LGBT Language and Situations

Read the following words silently in your head. Notice the way each of them makes you feel. Think of other derogatory words you've heard or spoken. After you've read the list sit quietly for a moment and make a commitment to eliminate those words from your vocabulary.

Dyke

Lesbo

Gay

Faggot

Butch

Tranny

Retard

Twinkle Toes

Weirdo

Freak

Moron

He/She/It

Loser

Gay Boy



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## Study Exercise



Click on the choice that best answers the following question.

When is it OK to use the term "That's so gay?"

- A) Anytime
- B) As long as you referring to something boring
- C) Only if there are no LGBTQ people around
- D) Never

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Correct!

It is never OK to use "That's so gay" or any other derogatory term toward LGBTQ.

Click "Continue" to advance to the next lesson.

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## Creating a Safe Space

Developing a safe space is a critical element in supporting all students but specifically marginalized students such as LGBTQ. Establishing the space may be easier than you might think. You may already have some of the elements in place within your classroom or school setting. The following exercise will help you identify what elements you already have and what elements you could easily modify or improve upon to create the ideal space.



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## Creating a Safe Space

### Exercise

Sit quietly for a moment and think about a place that brings you comfort. A place where you can be yourself and feel comfortable just being. Now ask yourself the following questions and think carefully about each answer:

1

2

3

How does this space feel?

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## Creating a Safe Space

### Exercise

Sit quietly for a moment and think about a place that brings you comfort. A place where you can be yourself and feel comfortable just being. Now ask yourself the following questions and think carefully about each answer:

1

2

3

What does it look like?

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## Creating a Safe Space

### Exercise

Sit quietly for a moment and think about a place that brings you comfort. A place where you can be yourself and feel comfortable just being. Now ask yourself the following questions and think carefully about each answer:

1

2

3

Identify elements that you love and visualize how you can incorporate those elements into a safe space.

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### Creating a Safe Space

#### How to Create a Safe Space

A safe space can be virtually anywhere. A classroom is ideal because it already has many of the elements. The area need only consist of:

1. a place free from judgement, bullying, or anti-LGBT language
2. someone willing to be an active listener and maintain confidentiality
3. private/quiet area for reflection or conversation

As mentioned in Lesson 5, one effective way to establish a safe space is to download and implement the free Safe Space Kit from the [GLSEN.org](http://GLSEN.org) site.

By using and displaying Safe Space stickers and posters, you are sending a visible message that you are an ally. You are modeling a supportive environment for LGBTQ youth and all students and staff. These simple steps will help you incorporate inclusion in an even and effective way.



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## Study Exercise



Select the choice that best answers the following question:

A safe space should have which of the following?

- A) Be set in a busy area with a lot of people around
- B) Be in a quiet space that allows for one-on-one conversation
- C) Large visible windows and open areas
- D) Does not need to have an ally present



Correct!

Quiet and room for one-on-one interactions is essential for any safe space.

Click "Continue" to advance to the next lesson.

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## Summary

The goal of this course has been to familiarize educators with the issues LGBTQ students face and how an educator can become a respected ally and advocate. LGBTQ students experience less depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts when allies are present and active in their lives. Being an ally and creating a safe space for LGBTQ students can easily be incorporated into your classroom and school settings as well as your existing style of educating.

### References and Resources



Click below to view more.

References

Resources

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## References



1. Public Broadcasting Service: American Service. "Timeline: Milestones in the American Gay Rights Movement." PBS: American Experience. Accessed July 20, 2016. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americalexperience/features/timeline/stonewall/>
2. Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. "Safe Space Learning Kit." GLSEN. Accessed July 26, 2016. <http://www.glsen.org/participate/programs/safe-space>
3. The Trevor Project. "Facts About Suicide." The Trevor Project. Accessed July 26, 2016. <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/pages/facts-about-suicide>

## Resources



- Teaching Tolerance. "Best Practices: Creating an LGBT-inclusive School." Teaching Tolerance. Accessed July 26, 2016. <http://www.tolerance.org/lgbt-best-practices>
- Human Rights Campaign. "Student Non-Discrimination Act." Accessed July 26, 2016. <http://www.hrc.org/resources/student-non-discrimination-act>
- American Civil Liberties Union. "Know Your Rights: LGBT High School Students – What to do if You Face Harassment at School." ACLU. Accessed July 26, 2016. <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/lgbt-high-school-students-what-do-if-you-face-harassment-school>

## Exam Agreement

### Congratulations

You have completed the learning portion of this course and your time spent viewing the content has been recorded. In order to complete this course, you must pass the following exam. If you feel you do not fully understand the content you can return to the course and review the material before proceeding.

In order to take the exam you must agree with the following statement:

*"I certify that I am the registered user of this account and that I am responsible for the test answers I am about to give. I will not receive test answers from another person, or any other source during the testing process."*

Improper testing shall result in nullification of any certificate received as a result of passing this course.

I understand and agree

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## INTRODUCTION TO UNDERSTANDING THE RIGHTS OF LGBT STUDENTS (EDU) EXAMINATION

Please answer the following test questions:

1. A safe place can do which of the following?
  - A.  Increase bullying
  - B.  Decrease bullying
  - C.  Increase the number of gay students a school has
  - D.  Decrease the number of gay students a school has
2. The letters LGBTQ stand for:
  - A.  Lesbian, Gay, Transgression, Biannual, and Questioning
  - B.  Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning
  - C.  Lesbian, Gay, Binary, Transgender, and Questioning
  - D.  Lesbian, Gay, Bisensory, Transgender, and Queer
3. Which of the following phrases depicts the best use of the word "gay?"
  - A.  "That movie was so gay!"
  - B.  "My friend Kevin is sooooo gay!"
  - C.  "You're so gay!"
  - D.  "I'm going to a wedding this weekend and the couple is gay."

4. A Safe Space can be \_\_\_\_\_.

- A.  incorporated into your classroom.
- B.  a fun place to hide if you are LGBTQ.
- C.  an obvious target for child predators.
- D.  located in a cafeteria.

5. The gay rights movement gained strong momentum in which decade?

- A.  80s
- B.  90s
- C.  2000s
- D.  It has not gained momentum in the past 30 years.

6. Which of the follow are one of the four requirements of being an ally?

- A.  Leaving your classroom door open
- B.  Talking to other students about the LGBTQ student
- C.  Telling your principal that a certain student is gay
- D.  Being an active listener



8. One of the most important aspects of becoming an Ally is:

- A.  Assessing your own belief system
- B.  Telling all your friends you're an Ally
- C.  Hanging up rainbow posters
- D.  Searching for LGBT students

9. Which of the following defines sexual orientation best?

- A.  The position you prefer during sexual acts
- B.  The inner feelings of who a person is attracted to
- C.  The outward expression of sexual desire
- D.  The inward desire to be gay

10. The word \_\_\_\_\_ is considered anti-LGBT language and should be avoided.

- A.  Lesbian
- B.  Transgender
- C.  Questioning
- D.  Faggot

Submit

100%

**Congratulations!**  
You have passed the exam.

Please let us know how we're doing

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The content was relevant and well-organized

Excellent  Good  Average  Fair  Poor  N/A

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