

THE ALLY WEEK ACTION

As you know, Ally Week is an opportunity for you to identify who in your school is an Ally against anti-LGBT bullying and harassment. The Ally Week Action is a great way to do that. The Ally Week Action allows you to have conversations about why anti-LGBT bullying is an important issue, get people to pledge to be an Ally, and to get email addresses to follow up with Allies throughout the year.

Here's how it works:

Get Permission.

Doing any activity in your school usually requires that you obtain some kind of permission from your principal or other school administrator like an activities director. If you have a GSA your adviser should be able to help you with the process. Just make sure you plan to ask early enough in advance.

Be Prepared.

Download and print several copies of the Ally Week Pledge Form and Ally Week Pledge Card sheet. You'll want to print about twice as many Pledge Card sheets as Pledge Forms. Cut the Pledge Cards. Get a clipboard or a strong notebook and a couple of pens for people to sign the Pledge Form. Plan to wear your Ally Week pin, sticker or t-shirt for more visibility, or take an Ally Week poster to hold or put up nearby. Select a time where a few friends or GSA members can join you, and place (you remembered to get permission, right?) where there will be a lot of people who might sign the pledge. Or you can keep the forms with you talk to students throughout the week.

Plan and Practice.

Getting pledges is great, but it's also really important that you have conversations with people in your school about anti-LGBT bullying and how important it is to be an Ally. You should plan and practice these conversations in advance to make your action go more smoothly.

Think about the following questions to help you prepare your message.

- Why do you care about anti-LGBT bullying?
- How are Allies important?
- What do people in your school need to feel safe?

These facts can help you add emphasis to your message about the importance of stopping anti-LGBT bullying.

According to the 2007 National School Climate Survey:

- Nearly nine out of ten LGBT students reported being verbally harassed at school because of their sexual orientation.
- Six in ten LGBT students reported that they felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation.
- LGBT students were more than five times as likely as the general population of students to miss school because they felt unsafe.

Take Action.

Ask people in your school or community if they will pledge to be an Ally. Read them the Ally Week Pledge at the top of the Pledge Form then ask that they sign to show their support. In addition, ask that they provide their email address so they can more about how to be an Ally. After they sign, give them an Ally Week Pledge Card so they remember their important pledge. You can also ask if they want to wear a sticker so they can show others that they are an Ally.

Follow-Up.

Remember, the key isn't just the number of pledges, but how many conversations you had about anti-LGBT bullying and harassment. After your action, count how many pledges and compile the email addresses you received. You can enter the number in the My GLSEN Events section of studentorganizing.org. If you send the email addresses to GLSEN, we can provide Allies with more information on how to make schools safe year-round. You can do this three ways:

1. Type the email addresses into the body of an email and send it to info@allyweek.org;
2. Fax pledge forms to 212-727-0254;
3. Or mail them to:

GLSEN
Ally Week Pledges
90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10004

Make sure you keep copies of the email addresses of your Allies so you can keep them involved by sending an email to thank them for their important pledge, including them in your GSA's email list, or inviting them to your next event.

Congratulations!

We hope you have a wonderful Ally Week! To share your Ally Week story, ideas or to get more information email info@allyweek.org.