

# HOW TO BE AN ALLY

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Across time and place, people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, queer, questioning and intersex (LGBT2SQ+) have faced an almost universal history of exclusion, discrimination, and violence. As an ally, we can help to end oppression and create equality. Following are some ways to be an ally.

## BECOME AWARE OF YOUR OWN BIASES & ASSUMPTIONS

- Recognize that we are all taught a rigid system of gender roles.
- Take the time to talk to people and educate yourself.
- Never assume a person's gender.
- Don't make assumptions about a person's sexual orientation.

## LEARN ABOUT GENDER IDENTITY & SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- Sexual orientation and gender identity are two different things.
- Gender is not just male or female.
- There are many diverse orientations for sexuality.

## TALK THE TALK

- Learn and use inclusive, appropriate, and respectful language that represents the diversity in gender and sexuality. This acknowledges the diverse identities that people may have.

## BE A PART OF CREATING SAFE AND AFFIRMING ENVIRONMENTS

- Challenge homophobic and transphobic jokes, slurs, or comments when you hear them; if it is not safe to do so, call the police or security.
- Use inclusive language that is non-binary and supportive. For example, use "partner" to refer to a member of a couple.

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### BE VISIBLE IN YOUR SUPPORT

- o Wear a button or wristband; have a sticker on your desk, binder, or door.
- o Put an affirmative poster up to advertise LGBT2SQ+ events; attend them too!

### WALK ALONGSIDE

- o Model support for diversity in gender identity and sexual expression.
- o Don't make assumptions. You don't know another person's identity unless they tell you.
- o Don't pressure people to label themselves.
- o Don't "out" someone or disclose information about their identity for them without their request or permission.
- o Listen for how a person identifies or refers to themselves and use their language.

### KEEP LEARNING

- o Listen to people and be willing to learn something new.
- o Admit when you make a mistake or don't know, and invite someone to teach you.

**RELAX, BE YOURSELF, AND HAVE FUN!**