

10 Things You Can Do to Be a Straight Ally

Looking for simple ways to start being more engaged and active straight ally?
Try using a few of these suggestions to build your ally skills and start creating change.

1. **Be open.** Talk about having gay friends, family, colleagues, or acquaintances. When you talk about them, don't omit the fact that they're gay, lesbian, bi, or transgender (GLBT).
2. **Ask questions.** Especially when you aren't sure about the acronyms, terminology, or words to use when talking about your gay friends, family, colleagues, or acquaintances.
3. **Become informed.** Learn about the realities, challenges and issues affecting the lives of GLBT people through websites, books, documentaries, and educational materials.
4. **Speak up.** When you hear derogatory slurs or joke, like "that's so gay," say something – and don't tell them yourself.
5. **Help your kids.** Teach them about all different kinds of families. Be mindful of the day-to-day messages that they are receiving about gay and transgender people and issues in school, from friends, the web, and on TV.
6. **Reconsider your membership.** There are many organizations that overtly discriminate against the GLBT community. Be sure to let them know why you are leaving or not joining in the first place.
7. **Think about where you spend.** Support gay, lesbian, bi, and/or transgender-owned and friendly businesses that have policies in place to ensure equal treatment for all.
8. **Challenge those around you.** Encourage your social club, workplace, or faith community to consider inclusive policies that protect the GLBT community from discrimination.
9. **Get loud.** Write letters to the editor of your newspaper to comment as a straight ally on why you support respectful and equal treatment for GLBT people.
10. **Become an advocate.** Call, write, e-mail, or visit public policy makers and let them know that as a straight person who votes, you support laws that extend equal rights and protections to all people.

Don't forget to visit www.straightforequality.org and read *the guide to being a straight ally*.

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