

Making Your School A “Hate Free Zone”

Creating a visual campaign against hate at your school

Posters are a great way to build a school community where hate is not tolerated and where people are supported and can find allies. Many GSAs create simple posters for teachers to put up in their classrooms to show their commitment to stop hateful slurs and harassment.

Examples:

	<p>Your freedom to be who you are is respected here. Your sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion, national origin, and physical capabilities are all parts of who you are, and your freedom to be an individual will be respected by the bearer of this symbol.</p> <p><i>GSA Network, Central Valley, CA</i></p>		<p>The “Safe Zone” symbol is a message to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth and adult allies. A person displaying this symbol is one who will be understanding, supportive, and trustworthy if a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender youth needs help, advice, or just someone with whom they can talk.</p> <p><i>National Youth Advocacy Coalition Bridges Project • nyac@nyacyouth.org</i></p>
	<p>I’m an Ally if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I respect all students, staff, and families regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, physical ability, sexual orientation or gender identity. • I believe that the school community is enriched by a diverse school population. • I am willing to confront verbal, physical, and sexual harassment on my school site. • I care about the safety of all persons on campus and am willing to do what I can to help create a safer environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose not to use slurs based on stereotypes about gender, race, ethnicity, physical traits, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation. • I will maintain confidentiality if a friend confides in me unless that person is in danger of causing harm to self or others. <p><i>San Francisco Unified School District, Support Services for Sexual Minority Youth Ally Program</i></p>		

Some tips and ideas for launching a visual campaign:

- **Make your posters brightly colored.**
- **Create an agreement for teachers to sign.**
- **Give posters to teachers after you educate them** about homophobia at your school and offer strategies for confronting harassment in the classroom.
- **Make your posters and campaign about fighting all forms of oppression**, not just homophobia, and work with other student groups at your school.
- **Give teachers information about AB537**, the California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 2000, when distributing posters. You can find resources at www.ab537.org
- **Distribute resources with specific strategies about confronting harassment and facilitating dialogue.** Many teachers do not feel comfortable challenging slurs and harassment or facilitating conversations about sexual orientation and gender identity in their classrooms. As a GSA you can brainstorm and write down ways you wish teachers would stop hateful language and actions or see www.glsen.org for more resources.
- **Include gender identity and transphobia in your efforts.**



For more information and resources for Gay-Straight Alliances, contact GSA Network:

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