

Advocate for LGBTQ+ Young People:

A Guide on How to Be an Active Ally

Active allies are **critical to ensuring the safety of LGBTQ+ young people**. They do more than say they support LGBTQ+ young people; they take specific, concrete steps to support and advocate for them. They make sure LGBTQ+ young people are affirmed and celebrated. With this guide, we hope you understand that we can each take meaningful action and play a crucial role in building communities that are kind, brave, and inclusive.

Benefits of Active Allyship:

88%

of LGBTQ+ young people felt connected and less alone after receiving support online.

95%

of LGBTQ+ young people felt grateful or appreciative after receiving support online

28%

of LGBTQ+ young people with supportive in-person spaces reported nearly half the rate of depression compared to those without such support (28% vs. 53%)



“Sometimes I just feel like [I] have a group of tiny friends in my pocket, which makes me feel less alone.”

- White/Latine transgender nonbinary young adult

Why Your Support Matters:

Over 1 in 3

LGBTQ+ young people have experienced bullying and teasing online due to their LGBTQ+ identity in the past year.

60%

of LGBTQ+ young people report feelings of loneliness

33%

of LGBTQ+ young people reported having access to either in-person or online spaces that were “very kind.”

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How To Take Action:

Recommendations from LGBTQ+ Young People and Adult Experts

Note: Adult experts included academic researchers, educators, practitioners, policy makers, and executives from LGBTQ+-focused community organizations.

Actions to Take This Week:

- **Signal allyship.** Your Pride pin, sticker, or bracelet can signal you're a safe space for your neighbors and loved ones. Members of the community, including but not limited to elected officials, nonprofit workers, and educators, can show support for LGBTQ+ young people by wearing or displaying pride symbols in their official capacities if allowed and/or wherever else they are able. We also suggest displaying a Pride flag in places that you frequent, and adding books written by LGBTQ+ authors to your local library or book club.
- **Audit your media.** Review the movies, shows, playlists, and social media you engage with. Ask yourself: Are LGBTQ+ people's stories represented? Expand LGBTQ+ representation in the content you consume through television series and movies. Check out these recommendations for queer films from [Vogue](#) and [Trixie Mattel](#), which highlight authentic LGBTQ+ experiences and relationships.
- **Learn LGBTQ+ history.** LGBTQ+ young people appreciate when active allies help build connections between queer and non-queer communities through educating themselves and sharing resources. Spend ten minutes researching an LGBTQ+ topic, such as a historical figure from the Trevor Project's [LGBTQ+ history resource](#), that you did not know previously. Share what you learn with a friend, family member, or on social media. Knowledge builds context for stronger allyship.
- **Be kind and reach out.** A small gesture, like reaching out to friends, colleagues, and family members who identify as LGBTQ+, can make a difference. Even a simple message such as "*Thinking of you – how are you doing?*" shows genuine care and support. To learn how to support someone and have the skills to connect them safely to help, complete your [Be There Certificate](#).

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Long-Term Commitments:

- **Support trans young people.** As active allies, it is critical to combat disinformation with evidence and advocate for policies and elected officials that protect the privacy and rights of trans young people as well as prevent bullying and discrimination. Every person deserves the basic right to receive the health care they need, especially when it saves lives. Gender-affirming care provides a range of services, including mental health care, medical care, and social services. It is a well-established, evidence-based field of medicine supported by decades of scientific research, clinical guidelines, and every major medical and public health organization. Government involvement, such as subpoenas for personal information of trans young people, undermines the decisions made by families and health care experts and threatens the privacy and future of young people receiving this care.
- **Champion LGBTQ+ leadership in your community.** You can find guides here and here to ensure you're going beyond tokenism to meaningful inclusion so LGBTQ+ people are represented in leadership roles and community decision-making. You should also add LGBTQ+ awareness dates, such as Trans Day of Visibility and Pride Month, to calendars for your schools, organizations, and community gathering spaces.
- **Intentionally create safe environments—online and in person.** Active allies consistently strive to create safe and inclusive spaces that center LGBTQ+ ideas and perspectives. Demonstrate kindness and support in your online and in-person communities by actively listening to LGBTQ+ people and acting on what you're learning so you can advocate for norms that make inclusivity the default. For example, make an effort to state your own pronouns during introductions. You can find examples of young LGBTQ+ advocates to support here and learn insights from LGBTQ+ youth mental health advocates here.
- **Speak up in conversations.** When you hear misinformation or bias, respond calmly and clearly. You might say, *"I read something different. Would you be open to hearing what [organization] says about that?"* or *"Instead of saying _____, I've started saying _____. It feels more respectful."* Even brief, intentional responses can make a lasting difference in fostering safer spaces. If you witness someone misgender an LGBTQ+ peer, kindly correct them: *"Molly uses they/them pronouns."* By taking on this effort, you're helping to lighten the emotional labor from LGBTQ+ young people to educate, inform, and correct.

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Resources for Active Allies:



Complete the [Trevor Project's LGBTQ+ Ally Training program](#), designed for youth-serving professionals and [use this guide](#) to learn how you can advocate for policies and elected officials that support LGBTQ+ young people.



Educate yourself on LGBTQ+ terms and symbols by reviewing the [Matthew Shepard Foundation's LGBTQ+ Glossary](#), a resource designed to promote respectful and accurate language usage.



Increase the visibility of your allyship by using resources from [Straight for Equality](#). Download and publicly display their ["I'm an ally because..." card](#) to help LGBTQ+ young people feel welcome, or attend events listed in their [Ally Calendar](#) to show your support.



Use the [Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index](#) to identify and support businesses that champion LGBTQ+ equality.



Join [Give Us The Floor's](#) free mobile app, a supportive online community for LGBTQ+ young people and allies between the ages of 13 and 24.



Read our full report on [LGBTQ+ young people's experiences in online spaces](#) to better understand the importance of online communities for LGBTQ+ young people.

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