

## Being an LGBTQ2S+ Ally

Please copy and hand out with every sticker.

### By displaying this rainbow sticker in your classroom and school...

- You are an ally to LGBTQ2S+ students, staff, parents, community members, and visitors.
- You are helping to end the oppression of LGBTQ2S+ people and children of LGBTQ2S+ parents.
- You are committing to educate the school community about homophobia and transphobia, speak out about homophobic and transphobic incidents/practices in your school or community, and promote equal respect and treatment for everyone.
- You are identifying yourself as a “safe” and supportive person for LGBTQ2S+ students to talk to about their questions and/or concerns.
- You are pledging to make classroom and school activities inclusive for LGBTQ2S+ students, staff, parents and community members.

### How educators can help...

- Let others know that derogatory gestures and jokes are not amusing—they cause pain and embarrassment. Challenge your colleagues and students who tell jokes at the expense of a sexual, racial or ethnic minority. As with racial or sexist slurs, challenge students who use names, such as “gay,” “fag,” or “queer,” in a derogatory manner in your presence.
- Use incidents of hate speech or violence to develop a “teachable moment.” Be aware that the LGBTQ2S+ student is often uncomfortable, invisible, isolated and needs acceptance from you.
- An LGBTQ2S+ student may not identify as such due to denial, the pressure to conform, or need for self-protection. Don’t confront a student who is reluctant.
- If a student tells you that he or she is LGBTQ2S+, thank the student for trusting you and keep it to yourself. Listen carefully; don’t assume you know in advance what it means to this person to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, queer, Two-Spirit, or questioning. Keep the door open for further conversation. If the student needs help, refer to the school counselor or other support services.
- Seek opportunities in the classroom to introduce the contributions of LGBTQ2S+ people. If a key person in the field is LGBTQ2S+, say so.
- Use inclusive language in the classroom.
- Help students, colleagues and community members to acknowledge heteronormativity and its associated privileges.
- Support colleagues and students in the process of coming out.
- Look for new information on intersections between LGBTQ2S+ experiences and your field. The last few years have witnessed a blossoming of scholarship on LGBTQ2S+ issues in many disciplines. Encourage students to write on such topics.
- Contact the BCTF’s Committee for Action on Social Justice, or visit our website. We can provide assistance, useful information, and resources.
- Advocate for a discrete antihomophobic, and transphobic policy in your school district.
- Silence encourages and helps perpetuate homophobia and transphobia. Break the silence.

Adapted from Northern Michigan University’s Allies Guide:

[www.nmu.edu/multiculturalaledandres/node/4#meantobeally](http://www.nmu.edu/multiculturalaledandres/node/4#meantobeally)