

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

1. Encourage school administrators to adopt and enforce anti-discrimination policies for their schools or school systems, which include sexual orientation.

- Establish specific procedures for addressing discrimination complaints.
- Identify a person or team of people in the school who will be responsible for handling complaints.

2. Encourage training for all staff on how to stop harassment that occurs in their presence. Silence on the issue communicates to students that the staff member approves of the harassment or that the student deserves to be harassed.

- Provide appropriate training for both instructional and non-instructional staff. For example, bus drivers should receive training on addressing harassment that occurs in transit to and from school or other locations. School resource officers should also receive training that includes information on the settings in which harassment is most likely to occur.

3. Encourage training for staff and students on issues faced by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students.

- Prejudice and discrimination, and the harassment and violence that often stems from prejudice and discrimination, is rooted in fear and a lack of understanding. Policies alone do little to curb harassment and violence in schools unless coupled with educational programs that increase understanding and respect and build bridges across our many differences.

4. Introduce students to the principles of respect and kindness at an early age, starting with elementary school.

- General programs on kindness and respect, such as Character Education programs, should integrate the idea of kindness toward and respect for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons in an age-appropriate manner.

