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## 10 Steps for Starting a GSA



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1. **Follow Guidelines:**

Establish a GSA the same way you would establish any other group or club. Look in your Student Handbook for the rules at your school. This may include getting permission from an administrator, finding an advisor, and/or writing a constitution.

2. **Find a Faculty Advisor:**

Find a teacher or staff member whom you think would be supportive or who has already shown themselves to be an ally around sexual orientation issues. It could be a teacher, counselor, nurse, or librarian.

3. **Inform Administration of Your Plans:**

Tell administrators what you are doing right away. It can be very helpful to have an administrator on your side. They can work as liaisons on your behalf with other teachers, parent groups, community members, and the school board. If an administrator is resistant to the GSA, let them know that forming a GSA club is protected under the Federal Equal Access Act.

4. **Inform Guidance Counselors and Social Workers About The Group:**

These individuals may know students who would be interested in attending the group.

5. **Pick a Meeting Place:**

You may want to find a meeting place which is off the beaten track at school and offers some level of privacy or confidentiality.

6. **Advertise (and Get Food!):**

Figure out the best way to advertise at your school. It may be a combination of school bulletin announcements, flyers, and word-of-mouth. Also get food and tell people there will be food: people always come to meetings when you provide food! If your flyers are defaced or torn down, do not be discouraged. Keep putting them back up. Eventually, whoever is tearing them down will give up.

Besides, advertising for your group and having words up such as "gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning" or "end homophobia" or "discuss sexual orientation" can be part of educating the school and can actually make other students feel safer -- even if they never attend a single meeting.

7. **Hold Your Meeting!**

You may want to start out with a discussion about why people feel having this group is important. You can also brainstorm things your club would like to do this year.

8. **Establish Ground Rules:**

Many groups have ground rules in order to insure that group discussions are safe, confidential, and respectful. Many groups have a ground rule that no assumptions or labels are used about a group member's sexual orientation. This can help make straight allies feel

comfortable about attending the club.

9. **Plan For The Future:**

Develop an action plan. Brainstorm activities. Set goals for what you want to work towards. Contact Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network in order to get connected to all of the other GSAs, get supported, and learn about what else is going on in the community.

10. **Register Your GSA**

Now that you've started it up, register your GSA with the GSA network in your state! Visit our [National Directory](#) <sup>[2]</sup> to find your state's GSA network. And if you're in California, [register with GSA Network here](#) <sup>[3]</sup> and sign up for an [event](#) <sup>[4]</sup> or request a site visit or training at your school.

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**Source URL:** <http://gsanetwork.org/resources/building-your-gsa/10-steps-starting-gsa>

**Links**

[1] <http://gsanetwork.org/files/resources/10Steps.pdf>

[2] <http://gsanetwork.org/national-directory>

[3] <http://gsanetwork.org/register-your-gsa>

[4] <http://gsanetwork.org/events>