

CREATING INCLUSIVE GSAS

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GSA clubs play a critical role in helping make schools safer and more accepting for LGBTQ youth. Individuals in the LGBTQ community come from all segments of society, representing the spectrum of human diversity.

As a GSA club, your membership may already be diverse, or there may be more you need to do to make sure your club represents the full diversity of your school.

Tools to help you create an inclusive GSA

LGBTQ history is full of transgender and queer people of color who were the unsung leaders and heroines of many of our early struggles. It is important to teach your GSA that trans and queer people of color have always played a critical role in our history as a queer movement -- and that this role has not always been recognized or respected by white LGBT leaders. The LGBTQ youth movement cannot survive unless it includes people of color and addresses issues of sexism, racism, classism, ageism, and environmental injustice. To be effective, your GSA must honor the multiple identities within the LGBTQ community and consciously foster the leadership of queer youth of color.

In starting a GSA, it is important to educate yourself and your members about transgender issues. Taking on a Beyond the Binary campaign at your school is a great way to start educating your club and your school on issues affecting our community.

Your GSA may include straight allies and students with LGBT parents, and these members of your club should feel welcome and supported. LGBTQ youth in a GSA also depend on adult allies and will be working with adults in youth-adult partnerships to get things done.

As your GSA club gains strength and momentum, start building coalitions with other student groups by holding joint events and supporting other groups around issues affecting a diverse student population. In turn, when your club has actions and events, make sure to reach out to your coalition partners.

To gain a strong grasp on social justice organizing and to really learn about GSA Network's model for inclusive and social justice GSA clubs, make sure you attend one of our GSA Leadership Summits or GSA Activist Camp in the summer.

Inclusive GSAs are part of a larger movement for social justice, and GSA activism can be the first step of many to making your school and the world a better, safer, and more just place.

