

# *Take Action at* YOUR SCHOOL

## **YOU CAN DO MANY THINGS TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND QUESTIONING (LGBTQ) STUDENTS AND ISSUES AT YOUR SCHOOL.**

Don't feel overwhelmed if you don't have a gay-straight alliance or an organized LGBTQ group to work with. You can easily start small (for example, give your English teacher a list of LGBT-themed books, or put up a display for LGBT History Month). Be creative. And remember — you have legal rights, but you should use them and insist that they are respected. Here are some ideas on how you can take action:

### **COMMEMORATE DAYS IN LGBT HISTORY**

Make wallet-sized calendars with holidays on one side and famous people or events in LGBT history on the other (for example, the Stonewall riots, Harvey Milk's election or assassination or major civil rights court rulings like Lambda Legal's victory in *Lawrence v. Texas*, a sweeping decision on gay people's equal rights to liberty that marked a new era of legal respect for the LGBT community).



**INVITE SPEAKERS**

Invite local activists or representatives from LGBT organizations to speak at your school.

**HAVE AN EVENT**

Host a movie night with one or two of your favorite films about LGBT issues or featuring LGBT characters.

**WRITE ABOUT LGBT ISSUES**

Write an article or column for your school newspaper on LGBT issues at your school. Or make a zine collective and self-publish your own writing and drawings about being LGBTQ.

**READ AND LEARN ABOUT LGBT ISSUES**

Organize a book club and plan to meet once a month after school to discuss a book by a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender author. Or just share one of your favorites with friends.

If you encounter discrimination, or have questions about your legal rights, please contact Lambda Legal's Help Desk at 1-866-542-8336 or email [legalhelpdesk@lambdalegal.org](mailto:legalhelpdesk@lambdalegal.org) for more information and assistance.

TAKING ACTION:  
**Alison Shea**

When she joined Time Out Youth, an LGBTQ youth organization in Charlotte, North Carolina, Alison Shea was looking for a place where she could be herself without being judged or rejected. She found that place and then made sure that other LGBTQ young people would also find it when she signed up for Time Out Youth's billboard project. The idea was to place five billboards around Charlotte with the slogan "We are your gay youth." Realizing that the message would be far more powerful if it included photos of real LGBTQ young people, Alison and three other Time Out Youth members boldly appeared on the larger-than-life signs. For five weeks, the billboards stopped traffic throughout the city, promoting the visibility of LGBTQ youth and connecting them with a safe haven where they would find help, information and a welcoming community.

## SAVE THE DATE

BE SURE TO KEEP TRACK OF THESE DAYS IN YOUR CALENDAR — THEY'RE GREAT TIMES TO SHOWCASE SOME OF THE IDEAS LISTED ABOVE.

FEB  
12

### NATIONAL FREEDOM TO MARRY DAY

Falling on Abraham Lincoln's birthday and just before Valentine's Day, Freedom to Marry Day combines the themes of equality and love, and builds support for marriage for same-sex couples and for LGBT civil rights in general. Visit [www.freedomtomarry.org](http://www.freedomtomarry.org) for more information.

in  
APRIL

### NATIONAL DAY OF SILENCE

A student-led day of action where those who support making anti-LGBT bias unacceptable in schools take a daylong vow of silence to recognize and protest discrimination and harassment against LGBTQ students and their allies. Visit [www.dayofsilence.org](http://www.dayofsilence.org) for more information.

in  
JUNE

### PRIDE

Events (usually in June but vary in some places) include parades, marches, rallies, festivals and other activities celebrating LGBT people and culture and often commemorating notable events in LGBT history.

OCT  
11

### NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

The day commemorates the first march on Washington by LGBT people in 1987 and is dedicated to promoting honesty and openness about being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

in  
OCT

### LGBT HISTORY MONTH

Modeled after Black History Month and Women's History Month, LGBT History Month is designed to promote the teaching of LGBT history in schools, as well as in LGBT communities and mainstream society.

in  
NOV

### TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The Transgender Day of Remembrance memorializes those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice.