

What to do if you face trouble when expressing yourself through otherwise appropriate clothing:

1. Ask a supportive adult for help.

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2. If you are being denied entry to your dance, ask your principal to state the reasons in writing.

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3. If your school says that you need a parent's permission to wear what you want, ask your principal, *in writing*, whether parental permission is required for *all* students.

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4. If you are stopped from entering, ask for the person in charge of the event and tell them that students have the right to wear what they want at school functions as long as their outfits do not conflict with a gender neutral dress code.

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5. If you are denied entry to your dance, or if anyone continues to give you trouble after the fact, contact our Help Desk.

# LGBTQ+ Students

## & Dress Codes at School Dances

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In the U.S., LGBTQ+ students have a right to attend and enjoy school dances just like anyone else. You also have the right to freely express who you are, including in what you choose to wear. In a public school setting, clothing restrictions must apply evenly across all gender expressions.

According to the **First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972**, your public school has a legal obligation to respect the sexual orientation of all its students and not to discriminate against students on the basis of their sex - this includes at school dances.

**The rights of  
LGBTQ+ students  
are protected by the  
U.S. Constitution**

In other words, your school administrators cannot discipline you for wearing certain clothing unless it violates a gender neutral dress code. For example, not allowing a female student to wear a tuxedo or a male student to wear a dress may put the school at risk of breaking the law. Rules must be applied equally - they can't create exceptions based on what one person wears.

**If you experience discrimination or harassment on the basis of your sexual orientation or gender identity while attending your school's dance, please contact:**

**[www.LambdaLegal.org/HelpDesk](http://www.LambdaLegal.org/HelpDesk)**