

Allies, Too



This *Allies, Too* project was created to provide a chance for Christian students to show that, in the diversity of opinion, people with differing--and even opposing--viewpoints can still work together to build a community of tolerance and respect.

Every year, students in public schools are inundated with messages on a wide range of social issues. At the forefront of many hot topics that concern students today is homosexuality. This issue raises real concerns in the education field, as many students who either struggle with their sexual or gender identity--or identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (GLBT)--are targeted for harassment and bullying.

A secondary problem arises when GLBT-advocacy groups attempt to solve the problem of bullying by indoctrinating all students with their values. Rather than promoting true tolerance, they polarize students by marketing their own ideas as “progressive” and labeling all differing viewpoints as bigoted and “homophobic.”

Christians deserve to speak for themselves, and there’s so much we can do to help put an end to the real problems we all face. This project is meant to show that we can disagree, but still be *Allies, Too*.

How?

You can definitely show your support for safer schools without condoning homosexuality. In this short guide, we’ll give you some simple suggestions of ways you can make the *Allies, Too* campaign a great opportunity to impact your campus for Christ.

First, Pray!

Build a central group of friends who desire to make a difference in this area. Your first order of business when you get together is to be united in prayer for your campus. Ask God to move in your school. Commit with some of your friends to pray for God’s heart for GLBT-identified people, and to know His priorities. Pray that the love He has put in you will be evident to everyone.

You may be close to some students or even faculty who identify as GLBT, and you need to pray for them as well: that their hearts will be made receptive to the Gospel, and that deceitful influences in their lives will be broken. Pray specifically for those who are secretly struggling with their sexuality, that they will fall into grace rather than into a lie.

Second, Get Permission!

Talk to your principal and make sure that you have permission to do whatever you are planning to do. Whether you are starting a club, hosting an event or just passing out literature or materials, be certain that you won’t find out at the last minute that you’re not allowed to do it.

Know your rights in this area! Your school cannot allow a club or organization to promote a viewpoint and simultaneously deny you the same right. If you encounter biased resistance, there are groups such as the Alliance Defense Fund which specialize in defending your rights.

www.alliancedefensefund.org

Third, Get Informed and Equipped

Exodus Student Ministries exists to provide you with the information and resources you need to address this issue in a compassionate and Biblical way. Through our website (www.exodusyouth.net) you can acquire resources to educate you and your youth group or club, as well as materials for outreach events.

What Kind of Impact?

The purpose of ***Allies, Too*** is for Christian students to declare their commitment to true tolerance and making their campus safe. It isn't really about arguing with people who believe homosexuality is okay. There are other avenues and opportunities for that discussion, and while it will probably come up if you participate in a campaign, your students should be encouraged to keep coming back to the original message: "We can disagree and still be ***Allies, Too***."

Pledge Card Campaign

The simple pledge cards attached to this packet (and available at our website) give your students a clear understanding of the purpose and message of this campaign. Hold a meeting with your Christian club or youth group and have everyone sign the pledge. Designate a week to make the campaign happen on your campus. Put up posters urging other Christian students to sign up, and non-Christian or liberal students to ask you about it.

Give your campaign visibility on campus with ***Allies, Too*** t-shirts, stickers, posters and/or buttons. When other students ask what it's about, let them know!

Reaching Out

If there's a GSA or some other GLBT-themed club on your campus, take this opportunity to extend a hand of friendship. Schedule a meeting between your group and theirs, or just simply invite them to sit down to lunch with you to talk about how you can all work together to make your campus a genuinely tolerant and safe place.

Many young people who identify as GLBT are led to believe that Christians hate them (at least the ones who believe what the Bible says about sexuality), think they are sick or mentally ill. This is a deceptive ploy that not only unfairly denigrates you, but burdens them with the belief that they live in an environment that's far more adversarial than it really is. Take some time to get to know them, discover where you *do* share common ground, and find the ways you can cooperate in making your world a better place.

In short, build relationships. Let them see you for who you really are, and show them that you're interested in knowing them as people, not as a label.

It's More than a Week!

The ***Allies, Too*** commitment is an all-year thing! And it's not about homosexuality--it's about the Gospel. If these young people believe the lie that you hate them, they won't hear the really important thing you have to tell them.

We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NLT)

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Core Principles

This list of 10 “Core Beliefs” will help students involved in your campaign focus their minds and energy on the real purpose of *Allies, Too*. Making these points the primary goals for this campaign (as well as any other related efforts) will help students make wise decisions in the interactions they’ll have.

We compiled this list believing that this is really where Christian students’ hearts already are, but sometimes it helps to have it mapped out for you.

1. As Christian students participating in the *Allies, Too* campaign, we are declaring our commitment to doing our part in making this campus a harassment-free environment, to promote real tolerance, kindness and honest dialogue.
2. We are followers of Jesus Christ, dedicated to communicating His love and His offer of relationship with God to everyone, without exceptions.
3. We believe in the Biblical teaching that sexuality was purposefully created for marriage between a man and a woman, and that the upholding of this standard represents the best for everyone as individuals and as a society.
4. We believe that a homosexual, bisexual or transgender identity and/or behavior are outside of the intentional design of human relationships and sexuality, and therefore aren’t what’s best for us, regardless of whether we are drawn to them.
5. We believe that people who are personally affected by these issues are free to determine their own identity, and can choose to pursue freedom and change, as evidenced by the many people who have successfully done so.
6. We reject the notion that these beliefs somehow amount to hatred, bigotry, or a “phobia.”
7. We’re committed to sharing these beliefs respectfully and defending them knowledgeably.
8. We believe it’s healthy and good to have ongoing debate on these issues, for each side to seek to change other’s minds through thoughtful dialog—which is very different from harassment.
9. We believe that no individual or group’s safety is dependent upon the silence of another individual or group’s beliefs, and that no one’s rights should come at the expense of someone else’s.
10. We hold to the true meaning of tolerance: that people with differing—and sometimes opposing—views can still treat each other with dignity, kindness and respect, even if they can’t find common ground on a certain issue. We commit to show true tolerance to others, and we expect it in return

More Resources

On the Web...

Exodus International www.exodus.to

Exodus International is the largest Christian ministry in the world dealing with homosexuality from a Biblical perspective. Our network of more than 150 ministries, counselors and groups provides support and encouragement to people seeking freedom from homosexuality, and for family members affected by a loved one's struggle.

NARTH www.narth.com

The National Association for the Research and Therapy of Homosexuality is a great resource for information on homosexuality from a clinical and psychological perspective.

Sexual Identity Institute www.sexualidentityinstitute.org

Another Christian organization dedicated to real, logical research into sexual identity issues.

Alliance Defense Fund www.alliancedefensefund.org

An organization of legal experts dedicated to your right to hear and speak the truth.

Recommended Resources...

From the Exodus Bookstore <http://exodusbooks.org>

Truth & Tolerance DVD

This DVD features four authentic testimonies from young men and women who struggled with homosexuality as teens. Scott Davis, Director of Exodus Student Ministries, also leads an in-depth discussion on what God really has to say on this hot topic.

101 Frequently Asked Questions About Homosexuality

by Mike Haley

Just like it says, this book tackles the most popular questions Christians have about this topic.

God's Grace and the Homosexual Next Door

by Alan Chambers

The President of Exodus International and his team of leaders talk to Christians about how to show genuine, Christ-like love to their gay-identified neighbors while still upholding Biblical truth.

