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# ALLYSHIP: FROM INTENTION TO ACTION

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How to stop SAYING you are a LGBTQ+ ally and actually BE one!

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## Book Club Allyship

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Inspire social change at the next book club meeting by suggesting an LGBTQ+ book like, 'This Is How It Always Is' by Laurie Frankel or 'Redefining Realness', by Janet Mock. Spark positive learning and discussion!

## Donate Clothing

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Have children? Consider joining the In-Transition Clothesline as a donor at [SimplyGoodForm.com](https://www.simplygoodform.com)

Transitioning can be very costly for a family or individual but being able to dress as your identified gender is very important for positive mental health and well being.

Help support with a little help from clothing donations.

## Good Forms

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Consider the forms you fill out. Are they asking for gender based info that is non-essential? If yes, ask why? Or simply add a box to illustrate not everyone identifies M or F.

## Turn your good intentions into action:

Being an ally to those who identify as LGBTQ+ is more than simply saying you are an ally and not passing judgement. If you want to become a person who truly feels proud to be an ally to family, friends, and community members, here are some easy actions that speak louder than words and embody an ally spirit and mentality.

### 1. Be visible

Attend and participate in LGBTQ+ support, awareness, education events in your community. Visit PFLAG Halifax or Lunenburg Pride for a calendar of gatherings in your area.

Seek out opportunities to learn and listen to experiences and perspectives of LGBTQ+ people.

An effective and easy way to be a visible ally is to pop a LGBTQ+ rainbow bracelet around your water bottle or stick a rainbow sticker on your office door. A picture paints 1,000 words.

### 2. Stand up

Our communities need more positive voices. Speak out against discrimination of LGBTQ+ community that you see or read on social media. An easy way to do this is 'Report' any harmful, transphobic or homophobic social media; a quick click of your mouse has powerful impacts.

Challenge policies, practices, and procedures that create barriers for LGBTQ+ people and advocate for LGBTQ+ safe spaces.

It's No Joke: Anti-LGBTQ+ comments and jokes are harmful. Speak up and let your friends, family and co-workers know you find them offensive.

"Treat LGBTQ+ people like anyone else you know. Don't treat them any different." Dillon, Age 10

## Classroom Inclusion

Teaching visibility breaks down stigma and discrimination. If you're a parent or caregiver of an elementary aged child, consider asking their teacher what gender inclusive books they use to ensure all children are included and visible through representation. If they don't have any, The Travelling Inclusion Library at Simply Good Form would be pleased to supply free books for classrooms. Books like, 'Red, A Crayon's Story' and many others are suitable from K+. For a list of children's books visit their resource page.

## Think Space

'Everyone' washrooms and changerooms are essential in ensuring inclusion for people who are non-binary. Could your workspace be more inclusive? Think about universities, libraries, schools and ask if they've space for everyone. If not, ask why? Positive conversations will move us all towards a more inclusive society.

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## 3. Respectful conversations

Unsure of a person's gender or preferred pronouns? Don't be afraid to ask; or start a conversation by telling them yours. It can set the tone for a respectful dialogue.

Don't assume a person's gender or preferred pronouns based on their appearance; when unsure, identify a person by their name, as a person, a child, or simply ask.

When a person shares their preferred pronouns (she/her, he/him, they/their), use them! Let them know yours.

Be aware of how much "space" you are taking up. Are you leaving room in your dialogue, inclusivity, and environment for LGBTQ+ people? For example: use gender neutral language, don't assume everyone is in a heterosexual relationship, and attend inclusive spaces.

## 4. Boundaries = Respect

Gender identity and sexual orientation are independent of one another. They are not the same thing. Don't assume you know a person's sexual preferences. If that info is not shared with you, it's not open for discussion. Don't question or ask about a person's genitals... ever.

## 5. Education

People who do not educate themselves about how to be an ally can unintentionally make LGBTQ+ people feel uncomfortable, unheard, or unseen. But where to find the right info? Get started by checking out the websites below. We're here to help!

Educate yourself about LGBTQ+ history both the injustices and successes!

## 5. No fear

Most importantly, don't let fear be a barrier. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Simply apologize; ask well-meaning and respectful questions that foster relationship building; and always be open to learning more.



BriAnna Simons Therapeutic Services

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