

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER (LGBT) RESOURCE CENTER**

Ally Information

Benefits of Being an Ally:

- You open yourself up to new members of the campus community.
- You have the opportunity to interact with, learn from, teach, and have an impact on a population with which you may not otherwise interact with.
- You may be influential to your friend, classmate, roommate, teammate, brother, sister, professor, mother, or father who may finally decide that life and equality is worthwhile. By establishing your space as a “safe zone,” you will help LGBT people develop stronger self-esteem and pride in who they are.
- You create an inclusive campus community for members of the LGBT community.
- You will make the campus a better place for everyone. Oppression is a negative force, and as long as it exists, everyone is impacted.

Responsibilities for Displaying your Ally Stickers:

- You are an Ally for and with LGBT people and you will stay committed and active in creating equality for people within your community.
- You are making a life-changing difference for LGBT people in our campus community.
- You are designated as a “safe person” to talk to for someone who is LGBT. This means that you are committed to providing support and to maintaining *confidentiality*. You are also committed to assist people who may need to be directed to resources regarding their identity development.
- You will work to confront homophobia and heterosexism* by demonstrating support of diverse identities. This may include speaking up when a homophobic joke is told, planning, or just being present at community awareness activities.
- Though you are an Ally for the LGBT community, your actions mean little if you simultaneously put down other groups on the basis of their race, culture, gender, socioeconomic status, or physical and mental abilities.

*Belief that heterosexuality is the only “natural” sexuality and that it is inherently healthier or superior to other types of sexuality.

A Detailed Description about ‘What Is An Ally?’

Tuesday, September 28, 2004

- In the broadest sense, an Ally is “a person who is a member of the dominant or majority group who works to end oppression in his or her private and professional life through support of, and as an advocate for the oppressed population” (Washington & Evans, *Becoming an Ally*).
- Allies to racial, religious, and ethnic minorities have been remarkably effective in promoting positive change in the dominant culture, and only recently has their instrumental position been extended to the area of sexual orientation.
- Straight allies are some of the most effective and powerful advocates and sources of support for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender movement.

An Ally Strives To:

- be a friend
- be a listener
- be open-minded
- have his or her own opinions
- be willing to talk
- maintain a commitment to personal growth
- recognize his or her own prejudices
- join others with a common purpose
- believe that all persons regardless of age, sex, race, gender, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation should be treated with dignity and respect
- engage in the process of developing a culture free of homophobia or heterosexism
- recognize his or her mistakes, but not use them as an excuse
- be responsible for empowering his or her role in a community, particularly as it relates to responding to homophobia
- recognize the legal powers and privileges that heterosexuals have which GLBT people are denied

As important as it is to define what an Ally is in a positive sense, it is also helpful to understand the boundaries of an Ally’s role.

An Ally is Not:

- someone with ready-made answers
- necessarily a counselor
- expected to proceed with an interaction if levels of comfort or personal safety have been violated

Adapted from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation