

# Step Up and Be An Ally

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# Greetings!

Megan Edwards (*she/her*)

- PFLAG Member
- Advocate
- Ally
- Parent
- Educator



## -Disclaimer-

I am not an expert in being an ally and my experience may not be the same as every ally because every human is unique and every interaction between two human beings is different depending on space, time, experiences, and coffee :)

## Housekeeping

- As mentioned, our microphones are muted to prevent disruption to event.
- Depending on your comfortability, you can choose if you would like your camera on or off.
- Feel free to post any questions in the chat box and Maureen will monitor to share questions at appropriate times or during Q&A.

## Norms for Engagement

- This is a safe space where questions can be asked without judgement.
- Please take away the overarching ideas, but leave any personal information shared in this safe space.
- Share the time available and allow others the opportunity to participate.

# Ally, noun or verb?

A term typically used to describe someone who does not identify as LGBTQ+ but who is supportive of LGBTQ+ equality in its many forms and through a wide variety of different expressions, both personal and private. This term also can be used by LGBTQ+ people when they demonstrate support for different members of the community (e.g., a lesbian being an ally to a person who is transgender).

## Behold, the Straight for Equality Ally Spectrum®:

The  
*"I'm not really  
an ally...  
but I'll listen."*  
Ally



The  
*"I'm starting  
to get it."*  
Ally



The  
*"I really  
said it!"*  
Ally



The  
*"I'm focusing  
my time on  
learning."*  
Ally



The  
*"I'm talking  
about LGBT  
equality!"*  
Ally



The  
*"I'm Super Ally!  
Let's change  
some laws."*  
Ally



the straight for equality ally spectrum

# Why be an ally?

- Gallup's latest update on lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender identification finds 5.6% of U.S. adults identifying as LGBT.
  - This is an increase from 4.5% in Gallup's previous update based on 2017 data.
- As of 2020, current estimates were 37% of people said they personally knew someone who identified as transgender.

# The Goal of An LGBTQ+ Ally

- Create a safe space for marginalized/oppressed individuals to speak about their experiences and have their truths listened to by others
- Use your privilege to stand for and with the LGBTQ+ community to dismantle systems of inequality and oppression

# Be willing to listen

- When someone takes time to share with you their lived experience, hear them. Really hear them. How would your ideal listener engage with you?
- Empathize but avoid saying “I know exactly how you feel...” Consider instead “What I’m hearing you say is \_\_\_\_” or “That sounds \_\_\_\_\_. I am sorry that happened. How did that make you feel?”
- Use this as an opportunity to stop talking and start taking in information.
- Take this as one person’s experience, don’t generalize.

# Be willing to learn

- Acknowledge you don't know all that can be known about the issues and experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals
- Make a point to learn more
  - Join support/ally groups
  - Read, read, read
  - Stay current with news and issues impacting the community
- Ask non-invasive questions

# Be willing to be uncomfortable

- Learning new information, hearing you made a mistake, recognizing your privilege = can lead to discomfort and it's ok.
- This discomfort leads to personal growth and deeper understanding.
- Don't let this discomfort derail you from being an ally.
- If you make an error, correct yourself and grow.

# Be willing to act

What does that look/sound like:

- Asking someone to not use inappropriate words or speaking with someone about their behavior
- Considering the needs of others when making decisions
- Speaking up when inappropriate jokes are made
- Using inclusive language when speaking about others

# Golden Rule:

Treat others as you want to be treated

# Platinum Rule:

Treat others as THEY want to be treated (and that means you will have to ask and listen to find out!)



# PFLAG AA County/Annapolis



Support Group for Parents, Family Members, or Close Friends of LGBTQ+ Youth

- First and Third Wednesdays of the Month at 7:00 PM via Zoom (during COVID)
- First and Third Tuesdays of the Month at 7:30 PM in Annapolis (non-COVID)

**SAVE THE  
DATE**

**Sat. Oct. 30**

**ANNAPOLIS  
PRIDE**



# Resources:

- Guide to Being a Straight Ally Guide (PFLAG, 2020)
- 10 Things You Can Do to be an Ally (YWCA)
- PFLAG
- 10 Ways to Be An Ally & A Friend (GLAAD)
- How to Be an LGBTQ Ally (Next Avenue, 2019)
- Being an Ally to LGBT People (Youth Engaged 4 Change)
- Being an LGBTQ Ally (Human Rights Campaign)
- LGBTQ2S Toolkit
- How to get people's pronouns right and what to do if you slip up (CNN, 2021)