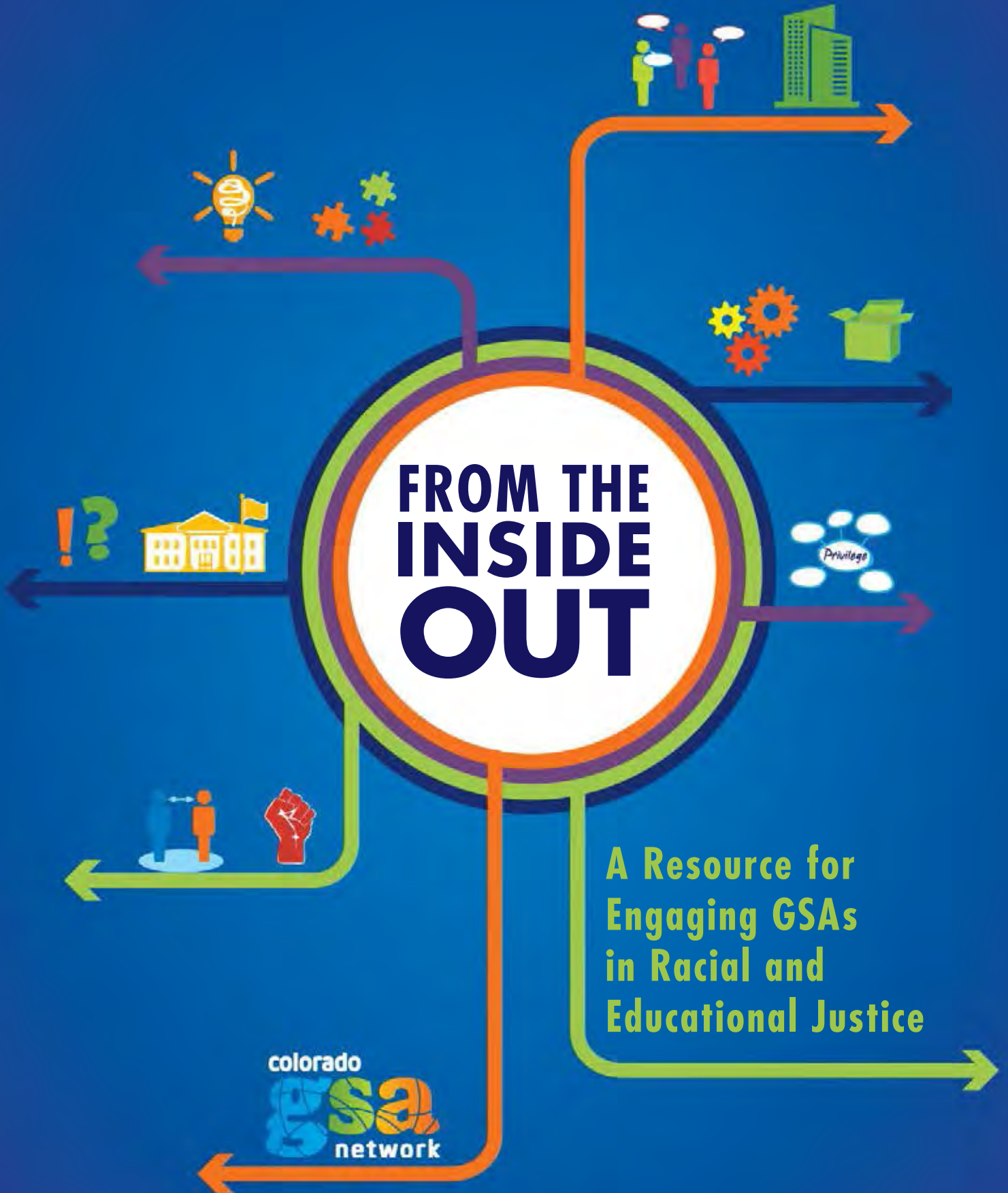


FROM THE INSIDE OUT

A Resource for
Engaging GSAs
in Racial and
Educational Justice

colorado
gsa
network



ABOUT THE COLORADO GSA NETWORK

ABOUT THE COLORADO GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE NETWORK



The Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Network is an undertaking of One Colorado, a statewide organization dedicated to securing protections and opportunities for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) Coloradans.

The network was launched in 2011 as part of a comprehensive plan to empower LGBTQ and allied students to combat bullying in their schools. To support these student efforts, the Colorado GSA Network has developed tools and resources for gay-straight alliances to educate their schools and communities. This particular resource is intended to expand the scope of

Colorado GSAs and to highlight the intersectionality and diversity that exists within the LGBTQ community at large.

The Colorado GSA Network intends for this tool to strengthen our statewide network of gay-straight alliances and to unite students from across the state and across cultures. We aim to facilitate leadership development through regional and statewide engagement. We also encourage each GSA to learn more about the Colorado GSA Network and the other resources available by visiting our website at www.cogsanetwork.org or calling 303-396-6172.

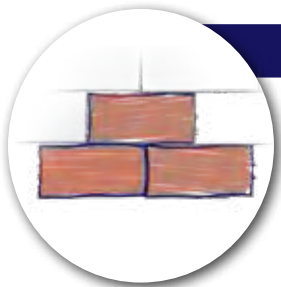
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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

In an effort to expand the scope of gay-straight alliances in our schools and to ensure that our activities, campaigns, and events are inclusive and affirming, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, etc. The Colorado GSA Network has compiled *From the Inside Out: A Resource for Engaging GSAs in Racial and Educational Justice*. Built to work in all GSAs, at any stage of development, this guide is intended to provide a variety of activities, discussion topics, and tools to use throughout the school year to examine intersections of identity and the concepts of privilege, power, and oppression, while encouraging personal reflection and community engagement. The tools and resources in this book are flexible and it is encouraged to be used in a manner that best suits your group's needs.

THIS GUIDE INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS:



FOUNDATIONS: Grounding Ourselves in Preparation and Knowledge

These three activities will set the framework for exploring the topics of power, privilege, oppression, and much more. This is a great place to start to ensure that everyone is on the same page and has a similar foundation in order to move forward.



UNPACKING: What's on the Inside—Working with Clubs and Ourselves

Another set of three activities for understanding the issues of power, privilege, and oppression from the inside. This section holds a focus on personal experiences while developing skills on facilitating and participating in healthy discussions.



UNDERSTANDING: Knowing the Systems and How to Work within Them

When working from the inside out, it is important to have a solid understanding of the systems we are a part of every day. These actions will not only foster an understanding, but will also help connect concepts of racial and educational justice and elaborate on the importance of doing anti-oppression work.



TAKE ACTION: Engage Your Club, School, and/or Community

Once your group builds a secure foundation of understanding the terms and explores the systems of social and institutional oppression and how they relate to power and privilege, the next step is to take action. Here we provide social, educational, and advocacy practices for developing a more inclusive GSA and engaging in social and education justice as a student organization.

THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE (STPP)

What is the School-to-Prison Pipeline? It is the policies and practices that are directly and indirectly pushing students out of school and onto a pathway to prison. The policies and practices that contribute to the School-to-Prison Pipeline are harsh punishment, suspensions, expulsions, police referral, ticketing, probation, etc.

NATIONAL SUSPENSION RATES FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN ENROLLED IN K-12 (WHO WERE SUSPENDED AT LEAST ONCE):

Race	Frequency (percentage)
Black	1 in 6 (17%)
Native American	1 in 13 (8%)
Latino	1 in 14 (7%)
White	1 in 20 (5%)
Asian American	1 in 50 (2%)

Opportunities Suspended, August 2012 Civil Rights Project

The connection of LGBTQ specific school advocacy to racial and educational justice is complex and cannot be fully explained in a single publication. For the purpose of this resource, it is important to highlight that LGBTQ students come in all shapes and colors, and to create genuinely welcoming and affirming schools, we need to build programs and provide tools that pertain to our identities as a whole. It is important to look at how people are interconnected and work towards breaking down barriers that tend to encourage us to compartmentalize the multiple and intersecting aspects of

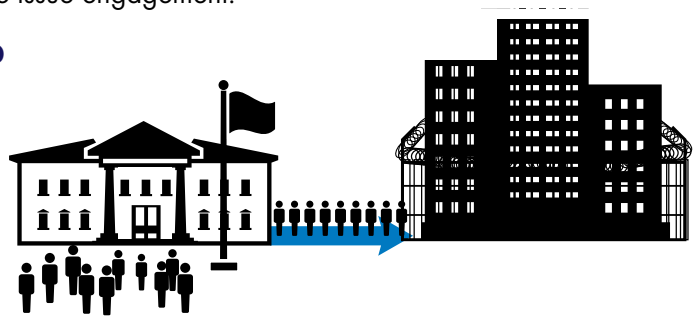
our individual identities. It has been detailed in anti-bullying advocacy, specific to the LGBTQ experience, that without inclusive and welcoming schools, youth are more likely to experience lower self-esteem, have higher rates of absenteeism and substance use, and have lower GPAs, and are less likely to express interest in postsecondary education (*GLSEN*). To create authentically inclusive school climates that empower youth and provide opportunities for success, it is imperative that our efforts go beyond single-issue engagement.

WHY THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE?

In the last 15 years, there has been a surge of local, state, and national action against bullying and harassment, which includes legislation, increased involvement of law enforcement agencies, and the use of zero tolerance. While having protections for LGBTQ youth is important and long overdue, there is danger of implementing such policies without giving attention to other systemic and cultural obstacles.

Undoubtedly, we must address harassment and bullying of all students and educate the public about the specific experiences of LGBTQ youth. However, when there is an over-reliance or misuse of these policies, it creates hostile and alienating environments for all students, not just the so-called "bullies". Zero-tolerance and harsh punishments as means to put an end to bullying have in fact reinforced the School-to-Prison Pipeline and increased school pushout, particularly for youth of color, LGBTQ youth, students with disabilities, and English language learners (*Two Wrongs Don't Make a Right*).

Existing harsh discipline and zero-tolerance policies have led to more severe consequences for even minor offenses, instillation of metal detectors and surveillance devices, presence of police and security officers, and the use of intimidation and harassment of the students in the name of compliance. The effects of both student-on-student bullying and schools with overly aggressive discipline policies are strikingly similar, emphasizing the reality that harsh discipline and zero-tolerance policies are not the answer to creating safe school climates. The movement to create safe and inclusive environments for LGBTQ students and the movement to end the School-to-Prison Pipeline have a lot in common, but at the same time exist in conflict. By failing to address the issues (bullying, harassment, school pushout, and the STPP) facing our most susceptible youth, we are pushing youth to disengage from the classroom and fostering an environment that leads to harsh punishment and zero tolerance for ALL students. There are alternatives to extreme forms of discipline that focus on offering recognition of bullying and harassment as unacceptable behaviors but do so in a manner that does not remove a student from school or promote criminalization of youth, and holds the student responsible for learning better behaviors and implementing those behaviors among their peers.



THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE (cont.)

CONSEQUENCES OF:

Student-on-Student Harassment/Bullying

Academic difficulties

Truancy

Acting out

Self-defense

Psychological/Mental health consequences

Dropping out or being pushed out

Schools with Overly Aggressive Discipline Policies

Academic difficulties

Truancy

Acting out

Self-defense

Psychological/Mental health consequences

Dropping out or being pushed out

For more information, see Two Wrongs Don't Make a Right at http://www.gsanetwork.org/files/aboutus/APJ-005_D5-FINALsmall.pdf

CHANGES NEEDED:

Safe & inclusive Schools for LGBTQ Youth

Serve youth who go unnoticed

Lessen alienation from peers

Healthier school climate

Led by LGBTQ parents, students, and allies

End the School-to-Prison Pipeline

Serve youth who are historically marginalized

Decline systemic pushout from peer-based institutions

Create healthy schools and communities

Led by affected youth, parents, & allies

Colorado has legislation aimed at developing disciplinary procedures and taking a big step toward ending our own School-to-Prison Pipeline.

In May 2012, the Colorado General Assembly passed an amendment to the Colorado School Finance Act aimed at stopping unnecessary referrals of students to law enforcement and reducing the existing racial disparities in Colorado school discipline. A key player in the efforts to pass The Smart School Discipline Law was our coalition partner Padres & Jóvenes Unidos (PJU). PJU also worked to rewrite the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between Denver Public Schools (DPS) and the Denver Police Department to include language that limits the involvement of police and limits tickets, arrests, and referrals for issues that do not represent threats to school safety (or felonious behavior). The new IGA also requires that all minor discipline issues be handled in-school and within the DPS discipline policy. It was through education, organizing, and student action that PJU was able to develop and win the passage of this innovative approach to school discipline.

THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE (cont.)

THE COLORADO SMART SCHOOL DISCIPLINE LAW:

What the law does:

- Advises schools to avoid referring students to law enforcement for minor misbehavior.
- Reduces exclusionary punishments by matching punishments with the level of the offense.
- Collects data on discipline incidents and tickets and tracks the information by race/ethnicity, age, and gender.
- Increases training for school resources officers that can be developed with input from the community.

Immediate implementation:

- Before the start of the 2012-2013 school year, school districts must rewrite their discipline codes to fit with the new state law. In addition to the above, the new codes must:
 - Include the use of alternatives like restorative justice so that students are not exposed to the court and jail systems for minor misconduct.
 - Eliminate automatic expulsion except for carrying firearms on campus.
 - Give students the right to appeal the decision to be expelled within 10 days of their first hearing.

Visit <http://www.padresunidos.org/smart-school-discipline-law> for more information.

As a brief but useful tool, this guide is not equipped to examine every aspect of all areas of racial and educational justice. However, this guide will provide activities and tools to examine the individual identities and experiences of students and do so by reflecting on and critically analyzing the existing systems of power, privilege, and oppression. It is with gained understanding and the education of those around us that we are best able to create sustainable change. While it is not mandatory to focus on the STPP movement when engaging in this resource, there is high importance in working for racial justice within the LGBTQ community while examining the association of the movement to create safe and inclusive schools for LGBTQ students and the movement to end the School-to-Prison Pipeline.



GROUP AGREEMENTS

A great foundation for any group discussion or event is to set some guidelines for and expectations of the group. The goal of these agreements is to establish a respectful dialogue that allows for questions to be asked and answers to be given in a manner that builds trust and holds all participants accountable. These guidelines should be one of the first items established for the group and should be referred to throughout the school year. Suggested for use with any discussion or activity, they are especially useful when exploring concepts or activities in which you may experience pushback or when you have new members or guests joining the group.



See additional examples in **Colorado GSA Network's Build It Up guide**, which can be found at www.cogsanetwork.org.

Purpose: To establish a list of expectations and responsibilities for maintaining honest and respectful dialogue throughout the year.

Materials: Chart paper and markers

Estimated Time: 20-30 min.



Directions:

1. Ask the group questions to get the discussion started:
 - a. What do you need to feel safe in having an open dialogue?
 - b. What are expectations you have of those engaged in discussions surrounding issues such as race, privilege, and discrimination?
 - c. How do we hold each other accountable for honest and dynamic discussions?
2. Once a rule is made, repeat it back to be sure it was heard correctly and then record it on chart paper.
3. Once your group has established a list that they feel is comprehensive, remind everyone that this is a group agreement and that all members of the group will be held responsible for meeting these expectations.
4. Distribute a completed list or post in a visible location at each meeting.

HERE IS A LIST OF GROUP AGREEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN CREATING A RESPECTFUL CLIMATE WHILE PROMOTING ACCOUNTABILITY:

Step Up, Step Back: If you are someone who has a lot to say, try to "step back" to let others have a chance to participate. If you are usually quiet in discussions and activities, try to "step up" and let folks hear your thoughts.

Don't Assume/Ask Questions: We may not know what others are thinking or feeling, nor do we know the different experiences that many folks bring into the room. Ask questions or ask someone to give a longer explanation to make sure you understand their point or perspective.

Think Well of Each Other: Conversations about oppression and privilege can be difficult to navigate and sometimes result in dialogue that may feel uncomfortable or even hurtful for participants. But it's important to recognize and value that we each enter this experience with the intention of building a shared understanding and goal of moving forward racial and educational justice.

Part of a System: It is also important to acknowledge that we are all part of and function within systems and institutions that teach and perpetuate misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups. This is true for everyone, regardless of our group(s).



GROUP AGREEMENTS (cont.)

DON'T BLAME OURSELVES, BUT HOLD EACH OTHER ACCOUNTABLE



Use the "Ouch": If you do hear a comment that feels oppressive or hurtful, say "ouch." Using the ouch can be easier than saying "that was racist" or "that comment was sexist." Talk about why the comment was hurtful or built on a stereotype. Be prepared to step in to help with a learning moment to ensure that participants can move ahead together.

Language Is Powerful: Because conversations around racial and educational justice come up rarely in many LGBTQ organizations, participants may rely on or use language that is rooted in racism or other -isms that exist. Terms like "illegal/s," "coloreds," or other words that have been used to put down and hurt people of color should not be tolerated in trainings, and need to be interrupted immediately. Some helpful phrases to use include:

That language is racist and is hurtful. Please use the term _____ instead.

We are trying to create a space that is safe for everyone in our community, and that kind of language is hurtful. Please don't use that term again.

Just as we don't allow hurtful terms like _____ (fill in a derogatory name used about the LGBTQ community) to be used in our organization, we don't want to use that term to refer to people of color either.

Expect Unfinished Business: It is impossible to fully address the complexities of power, privilege, and oppression in any one workshop, nor will we ever "solve" -isms or discrimination. You may even leave here today with more questions than when you arrived. Working toward racial and educational justice means a lifelong commitment to learning, growing, being challenged, and challenging others. These are good things!

Remember:

- No one person can speak for an entire community.
- Keep an open mind.
- Take risks. Comfort is overrated – dare to engage yourself.
- EQUALITY means ALL people, NO exceptions.



This list should be open-ended. As ideas or conflicts arise, your group should feel free to add to the list as needed.

Adapted from Basic Rights Education Fund's Standing Together: Coming Out for Racial Justice Toolkit and Lynn Weber's (2002) Understanding Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality: A Conceptual Framework, McGraw Hill.



ABC'S OF POWER, PRIVILEGE, & OPPRESSION

Purpose: To have participants gain a clear understanding of the terminology being used in group discussions and activities. This process will help in making sure that group members are coming from a similar foundation of knowledge.

Materials: Small sheets of paper or note cards, pens or markers, list of vocabulary words

Estimated Time: 30-45 min.



Directions:

1. Hand out terms (one or many) to each participant.
2. Ask participants to, individually or with a partner, try to define/explain their term(s) *See Appendix for definitions.
3. After a few minutes of brainstorming, ask students to share what they decided. You should discuss or explain the terms as needed.

Follow-Up Discussion:

1. Were most of the definitions ones that you were already familiar with? Were there any surprises? If so, which ones?
2. Which of these words are ones that you think are often misused?
3. Why do you think it's important to have a clear understanding of terminology?

Ableism

Ally

Anti-Semitism

Assimilation

Cisgender

Classism

Discrimination

Educational Justice

Ethnicity

Ethnocentrism

Hegemony

Heterosexism

Homophobia

Ideology (ies)

Immigrant

Inclusion

Ideological Oppression

Internalized Oppression

Interpersonal/Intergroup Oppression

Institutional Oppression

Intersectionality

Intersections of Oppression

Marginalization

Microaggression

Minority Group

Nationality

Oppression

People of Color

Power

Prejudice

Privilege

Race

Racial Justice

Racial Profiling

Racism

Refugee

Social Justice

School-to-Prison Pipeline

Stereotype

Sexism

Tokenizing

Transphobia

Whiteness

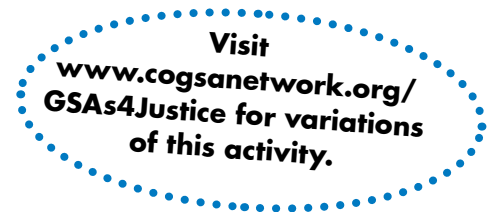
Triggers

Xenophobia

Zero Tolerance



Note: The above list of terms can be adjusted accordingly for age and/or subject matter. Whatever the list, it's critical that the facilitator have a solid understanding of the terms so that definitions can be clarified.



Adapted from DiversityWorks



MICROAGGRESSION

Language is the instrument used when exploring issues around inequity, and our communication is influenced by our surroundings. We contribute to or witness daily incidents of direct forms of -isms that have become so commonplace that they are no longer viewed as discriminatory in American culture.

that's so gay

that's ghetto

you throw
like a girl

These expressions are used to express that something or someone is bad, unwanted, or negative. When we use these types of expressions, they work to uphold stereotypes and promote -isms. Many well-intentioned individuals consciously believe in and profess equality, but unconsciously act in an oppressive manner.

A result of microaggressions being so commonplace is that people do not even realize when the language being used is oppressing them. They are a form of discrimination that remains highly invisible and contributes to continued discrimination and oppression in society.

Purpose: This activity is designed to teach individuals to recognize how different audiences can interpret language and microaggressions. It teaches participants to understand that when we use words, we should say what we mean and not assign slang or misappropriated terms to take their place.

Materials:
Activity worksheets
(Versions A & B in Appendix)

Estimated Time:
20-30 min.



Directions:

1. Pass out Version A and Version B of the Microaggression Worksheet so that half the group has Version A and the remaining half has Version B.
2. Participants should then be given instructions to:
 - a. Draw a line connecting the statements in the first column with all the possible implications in the second column.
 - b. Each may connect with more than one implication. Be ready to explain each choice. Think critically about how a person could interpret these statements as a put-down.
3. When students have completed this part of the activity, ask them to change four statements in Column 1 to be less harmful and offensive.
4. When students are finished, ask the class to read aloud two or three of the microaggressions listed and the implications, which the student matched with the statements.
5. Then ask why these statements could be interpreted in such a way.
6. When the class has discussed these, ask how the statements could be changed to be less harmful or damaging.

Adapted from Breaking the Prejudice Habit, by LaDeidre Robinson and Kelly Lynn Meredith.



After completing some or all of this section, you are ready to move on to **UNPACKING AND UNDERSTANDING**. Try Everyone has a Story on page 12 or The 4 I's of Oppression Activity on page 16.



EVERYONE HAS A STORY

Purpose: To have participants gain a clear understanding of the terminology being used in group discussions and activities. This process will help to make sure that group members are coming from a similar foundation of knowledge.

Materials:
Brief introduction of story and video
www.facinghistory.org/explore/exhibit/stories/everyone/watch

Estimated Time:
60-75 min.



Directions:

1. Introduce Arn's story to the right.
2. Show the video www.facinghistory.org/explore/exhibit/stories/everyone/watch.
3. After viewing the film, go around the room and ask each person to use **ONE** word to describe their feelings or reaction.
4. After the one-word share, use the following questions to engage in discussion about Arn's story and the importance of story sharing:
 - a. How did Arn's classmates respond to him? Why do you think they responded the way they did?
 - b. If you were one of Arn's classmates, what could you have done to help him make his way in his new school? Have you seen people ostracized in your school? How have people tried to prevent this from happening?
 - c. The teachers at White Mountain Regional High School struggled to find the best way to welcome Arn and his brothers. What does your GSA do to welcome new students? What does your school do?
 - d. Arn came to New Hampshire as an immigrant and a refugee. Are there immigrants and refugees in your school? Where are they from? What stories do they have to tell? What might you learn from hearing about their experiences of moving to a new country? Who helps them learn about their new community?
 - e. Arn explains that in school, "I was sitting next to a boy ... they didn't notice ... that I have a story to share. I didn't know that he has a story to share either, so we didn't share." How much do you know about the people you go to school with? How much do you know about the people in your GSA? Are there some kids whom you do not know much about? Why do you think Arn believes that it is important to know each other's stories? How does sharing stories help to create community?
 - f. Why did Arn's teacher think it was so important for him to learn to share his story? What power did Arn discover when he first spoke about his experiences?
 - g. Arn remembers that the power of speaking is "very different from having power with guns." What do you think he means?
 - h. How was Arn able to turn his story of victimization into a force for change? What enabled him to reach out to others?
 - i. Arn has inspired a number of people—from students to former gang members to diplomats—to work for peace. Who are the people in your life who have inspired you to make a difference?
 - j. How might new students from different cultures be affected by...
 - Your school discipline policies?
 - Your GSA's mission, events, and leadership?
 - Your general classroom environment?



Additional resources include a timeline and transcript, which can be found at www.facinghistory.org/everyone-has-story.

Adapted from Facing History and Ourselves: Everyone Has a Story.

continued next page →



EVERYONE HAS A STORY (cont.)



Arn Chorn Pond

Most of Arn Chorn's family was killed during the Cambodian genocide. At age ten, he slaved in a work camp, witnessing wide-scale starvation and murder. When the North Vietnamese invaded Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge forced him to become a soldier until he escaped on foot through the jungle in Thailand.

Adopted by a minister from the United States and coming to New Hampshire in 1980 at age fourteen as a refugee, Arn was one of the first nonwhite students to attend White Mountain Regional High School. In this video, he talks about how hard it was to fit into the school, and how he discovered the importance of telling his story and listening to the stories of other students.

Today, Arn Chorn Pond travels between the United States and Cambodia working on a number of projects with the hope of rebuilding civic life in Cambodia. His work has earned him numerous humanitarian awards, including the Spirit of Anne Frank Award and the Reebok Human Rights Award.

WE LOVE ALL OUR PEOPLE

Purpose: The aim of this specific activity is to participate silently and to take the time to recognize, reflect on, and accept the experiences of those around you. We want to not only understand where people are coming from, but we also want people to know that we accept and support each individual in our community and value their contribution. This activity helps participants to locate themselves in our society, and to understand that their experiences can be analyzed as a systemic problem, not just as individual issues.

Materials:
List of prompts

Estimated Time:
45-60 min.



It's a good idea to review Established Group Agreements before this activity.

Directions:

1. It is preferable to set up the room with chairs and/or desks in a circle.
2. Participants should be told that this activity must be done in complete silence (there may need to be a reminder of this during the exercise). Silence shows respect for participants and acknowledges their experience.
3. Inform the participants that a series of prompts will be read, and that as they hear each prompt, if the situation applies to them, they should stand up.
4. As each prompt is read and some of the students stand up by their chairs, the facilitator says, "Please look around the room and notice who is standing and who is sitting," and then those who are standing may sit before going on to the next prompt.
5. This list of prompts is not exhaustive and should be modified and/or expanded in order to fit the subject of your group discussion.



See www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for alternative ways to facilitate discussion.

continued next page →



WE LOVE ALL OUR PEOPLE (cont.)

We love all our people who... *(Important to read before each prompt)*

- ...Have ever ditched a class or whole day of school
- ...Have ditched or ditch school regularly because they felt unsafe
- ...Currently feel unsafe in school
- ...Travel more than an hour to get to school
- ...Have ever been bullied
- ...Bullied someone else
- ...Have ever spoken up for LGBTQ rights in class
- ...Have been written up for defiance or insubordination
- ...Have ever gotten detention
- ...Have been to in-school suspension
- ...Have gotten out of school suspension
- ...Have ever been expelled
- ...Have ever been stopped by the police or arrested
- ...Have ever been in a fight
- ...Have ever had to defend themselves
- ...Have ever been told their school couldn't protect them
- ...Have ever transferred to another school
- ...Have ever been transferred to another school against their will
- ...Have ever tried to go see a school counselor, but found the counselors were too busy or not able to help them
- ...Have ever been treated differently than other students by teachers because of their sexual orientation or gender identity
- ...Have had their name routinely mispronounced by people
- ...Have ever been the only person of their gender in a class or place of employment
- ...Have ever been asked to fill out a survey that asked for their "race" but did not include an option that accurately described their racial identity
- ...Represent the first generation of their family to attend college
- ...Have ever felt pressured to alter their appearance, mannerisms, or language to avoid being judged based on their race (can use additional identifiers, such as gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.)
- ...Have a physical, psychological, developmental, or learning disability
- ...Have ever had an educator, counselor, or other authority figure discourage them from pursuing a particular field of study or profession
- ...Are often expected to attend classes on their religious holidays
- ...Have ever had a job where they received less pay than somebody for doing equal work
- ...Have been sexually harassed in their school, workplace, or elsewhere
- ...Have to hide any dimension of their identity from most people in order to feel safe

For large groups (multischool) you can use these prompts to measure the experiences people have outside of your own school. We love all our people who...

- ...Have had to go through metal detectors to get inside school
- ...Have had campus police or school resource officers' station on campus
- ...Have material things lacking in your school, like missing bathroom doors or textbooks



It is important to remind participants that the point of the exercise is in no way to make them feel oppressed, but rather for them to connect with and more fully comprehend the systems of inequality that exist in society.

Adapted from resources by the National Association of GSA Networks and Teaching Race, Gender, Class, and Sexualities by D. R. Samuels.



FISHBOWL

Purpose: To encourage members to practice being both contributors and listeners in a discussion. This is a useful tool in encouraging all members to participate in the discussion and reflect on what a “good discussion” looks like, and is especially valuable when discussing controversial or difficult topics.

Materials:
Prepared questions

Estimated Time:
45-60 min.



Directions:

1. Select a topic for the fishbowl; almost any topic is suitable for discussion. Examples: school pushout/discipline; gender expression; discrimination/oppression; privilege, etc. **Note: Use the Vocabulary in the Appendix for ideas.**
2. Brainstorm and prepare discussion questions. The most effective prompts (question or text) do not have one right answer, but rather allow for multiple perspectives and opinions. Examples for the topic of school pushout:
 - Tell us about what’s going on in your school. What are the conditions? How are you treated?
 - Based on the activities, what resonated with your own or other students in your GSA’s experience?
 - What have been your experiences with school pushout: discipline, transfers, etc.? How do you think being LGBTQ affected this?
 - What is your GSA doing about issues around School-to-Prison pipeline? What do you think you should or could be doing?
3. Creating the fishbowl requires a circle of chairs and enough room around the circle for the remaining participants to observe what is happening in the “fishbowl.” Sometimes facilitators place enough chairs for half of the students in the class to sit in the fishbowl, while other times they limit the chairs in the fishbowl. The observing students often stand around the fishbowl.
4. Have half the group sit in the fishbowl for 10-15 minutes and then say “switch,” at which point the listeners enter the fishbowl and the speakers become the audience. Use the same questions. **See website for variations of the Fishbowl activity.**
5. You want to make sure the process is explained to students beforehand and provide instructions for the students in the audience. What should they be listening for? Should they be taking notes? Before beginning the fishbowl, you may wish to review your established group agreements and review the expectations for creating a respectful dialogue.
6. After the discussion, ask participants to reflect on how they think the discussion went and what they learned from it. The facilitator can ask for suggestions from the whole group or create small discussion groups to find out how to improve the quality of discussions (in the activity and your GSA) in the future. These reflections can be done in the large group, or can be structured as small-group conversations.

It’s a good idea to review Established Group Agreements before this activity.

Adapted from resources by the National Association of GSA Networks and Facing History and Ourselves.



After completing some or all of this section, you are ready to move on to the **UNDERSTANDING** section on page 16 or to try your hand at these activities in the **TAKING ACTION** section of this guide:

- Host an Art Show or Poetry Event (page 25, aka Have Fun and Be Creative)
- Dissolving Stereotypes (page 27)
- Start at “Home” (page 24)



THE FOUR I'S OF OPPRESSION

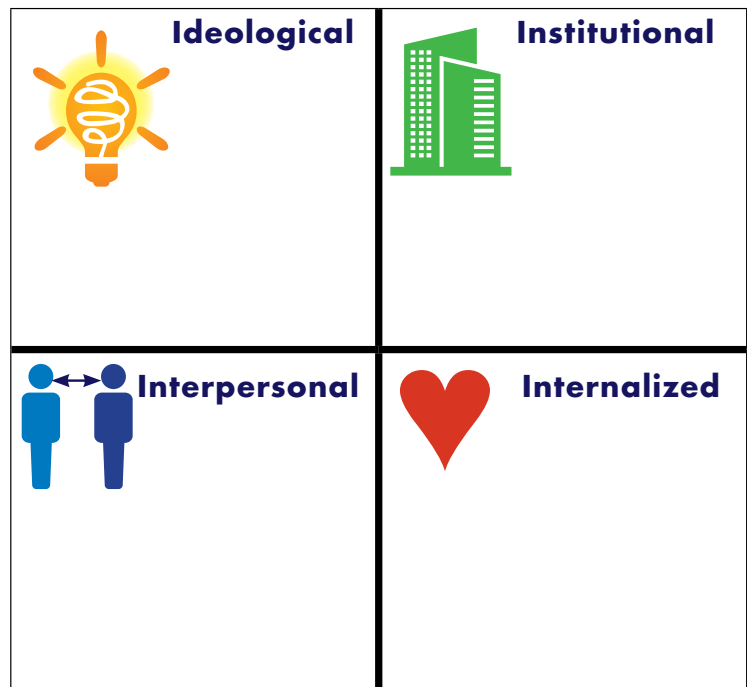
Purpose: In order to advocate against social injustices, it is important that we all fully understand the root and motivation of oppression. With this exercise, participants will gain an intersectional understanding of how oppression is produced and sustained through ideas, institutions, interpersonal interactions, and internalization. As we move forward to produce change in our GSAs, we have to unpack internalized beliefs so that oppressed groups can build unity, support their leaders, feel proud of their history, and recognize their potential to be an effective force for social change.

Materials:
Chart paper,
markers

Estimated Time:
60 min.



Preparation: Set up chart paper by dividing it into four equal parts, leaving a space on top to place the category (-ism), then write ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized, or place a small image at the top of each section.



Directions:

1. To open up the activity, it is important to review the definitions of **prejudice**, **stereotype**, **discrimination**, and **oppression**.
 - a. **Prejudice:** An attitude toward a person or group, formed without just grounds or sufficient knowledge, that will not be likely to change in spite of new evidence or contrary argument. Prejudice is an attitude.
 - b. **Stereotype:** To believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same.
 - c. **Discrimination:** Unequal treatment of people based on their membership in a group. In contrast to prejudice, discrimination is a behavior. To discriminate is to treat a person not on the basis of their intrinsic individual qualities, but on the basis of a prejudgment about a group.
 - d. **Oppression:** The systematic mistreatment of people because of their membership in a group.

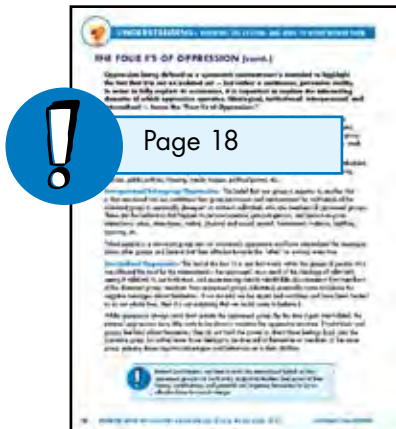
Review the ABC's of Oppression and your Established Group Agreements before this activity.

continued next page →



THE FOUR I'S OF OPPRESSION (cont.)

2. Pick a category: racism, homophobia, sexism, transphobia, classism, etc.
3. Read or make handouts with the information on page 18.



! Option: Break into groups and have each read about and then present a form of oppression from the list to the large group.

4. Before proceeding, ask for a quick example of each type of I-Oppression so that your participants have an idea of what they will be coming up with. (see example in Appendix)
5. With the chart paper ready, ask for examples of ideological oppressions that exist around your selected -ism.
6. The size of the lists will vary, and the facilitator is welcome to contribute, but is encouraged to let the group come up with the suggestions. If there is a question about where an item belongs on the chart, engage in a brief group discussion until a majority have agreed on where to place it on the chart.
7. Once the group feels satisfied with the list of ideologies, move on to institutionalized oppression. Prompt the shift with "How do these ideas show up in our institutions?" The members of your group will start suggesting the rules, laws, and policies that exist.
8. Once your group is again satisfied with the examples listed under institutionalized oppression, you can move on to interpersonal oppression by asking "How do these ideas, actions, laws, and policies affect how we treat other people?"
9. Finally, address internalized oppression. Once you have covered ideological, institutional, and interpersonal oppression the next question to ask the group is "How do people internalize these messages about themselves?"
10. When finished, use the following discussion questions to elaborate on what your group has just uncovered:
 - a. Why is it important to draw a connection between these four types of oppression?
 - b. What are the implications of these systems in our own school (i.e. dress codes, discipline policies, etc.)?
 - c. What can our GSA do to teach others about these types of systematic oppression? (See Take Action)

This exercise can be done numerous times using different categories (-isms) and can be used to encourage a deliberate conversation with any group.

Adapted from N.A. Blom's Four I's Activity.

continued next page ➡



THE FOUR I'S OF OPPRESSION (cont.)

Oppression being defined as a systematic mistreatment is intended to highlight the fact that it is not an isolated act, but rather a continuous, pervasive reality. In order to fully explain its occurrence, it is important to explore the intersecting domains in which oppression operates: ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized – hence the “Four I’s of Oppression.”

Ideological Oppression: At the core of any oppressive system is the idea that one group is somehow better than another, and this idea gets elaborated on in a number of ways – more intelligent, harder working, stronger, more capable, more deserving, chosen, superior, etc. The dominant group holds this idea about itself and then applies opposing qualities to the other group – stupid, lazy, weak, incompetent, worthless, less deserving, etc.

Institutional Oppression: The idea that one group is better than another then becomes embedded in our social institutions – laws, legal systems, police practice, education system and schools, hiring policies, public policies, housing, media images, political power, etc.

Interpersonal/Intergroup Oppression: The belief that one group is superior to another that is then structured into our institutions, then gives permission and reinforcement for individuals of the dominant group to personally disrespect or mistreat individuals who are members of oppressed groups. These are the behaviors that happen in person-to-person, group-to-person, and person-to-group interactions: jokes, stereotypes, verbal, physical and sexual assault, harassment, violence, belittling, ignoring, etc.

*Most people in a dominant group are not consciously oppressive and have internalized the messages about other groups and believe that their attitudes are justified or even supported.

Internalized Oppression: The last of the four I’s is one that works within the groups of people who are affected the most by the mistreatment – the oppressed. As a result of the ideology of inferiority, seeing it reflected in our institutions, and experiencing clearly identifiable discrimination from members of the dominant group, members of oppressed groups (identities) eventually come to believe the negative messages about themselves. If we are told we are stupid and worthless and have been treated as such our whole lives, then it is not surprising that we could come to believe it.

While oppression always starts from outside the oppressed group, by the time it gets internalized, the external forms of oppression have little work to do to maintain the oppressive structure. If individuals and groups feel bad about themselves, they do not hold the power to direct those feelings back onto the dominant group, but rather, they direct those feelings at themselves or members of the same group, passing those negative stereotypes and behaviors on to their children.



Remind participants: we have to undo the internalized beliefs so that oppressed groups can build unity, support their leaders, feel proud of their history, contributions, and potential, and organize themselves to be an effective force for social change.



POWER CHART

Purpose: This activity will illustrate which groups in society hold power over other groups. The goal is to highlight the “-isms” that hold divisions of power in place, considering how power is maintained. It is a useful tool in navigating the discussions, events, and actions listed throughout this guide.

Materials:
Chart paper,
markers

Estimated Time:
20-30 min.



Directions:

1. Set up chart paper, either three pieces or columns (see page 36 of the Appendix for example).
2. Ask the participants to list the groups in our society that hold power. Write these on the left side of the paper. Use the sample power chart in the Appendix to make sure that you cover all that are included.
3. Next, ask the participants to list the groups that the “power groups” on the left have power over. List these on the far right, across from the power groups.
4. Once the lists are created, label the left side as the “power” side and the right side as the “target” side. **Be sure to allow space in the middle between the two sides.**
5. Ask the participants to name the “-isms” that maintain the power/nonpower relationship for each line on the chart. Invite them to offer examples of institutional and/or interpersonal discrimination that are demonstrations of the “-isms.”
6. Use these questions to engage the participants in a discussion:
 - a. How do you imagine that these “-isms” came to be?
 - b. What myths or lies are critical in maintaining these “-isms”?
 - c. When people on the power side of the chart start believing the myths and lies, we call it “internalized privilege,” and when those on the target side do, we call it “internalized oppression.” What are the real-world implications of internalized privilege and internalized oppression?
 - d. Where do you see yourself on the chart? Since it’s rare that any one person would be entirely on the power side or entirely on the target side, it would seem that most people who participate in this system of oppression would try to dismantle it. Why has that not happened?
 - e. In light of our discussion of the power chart, what do you think can be done to address inequality in our group/school/community? Why is change so difficult?

Be sure to review the Established Group Agreements before this activity.



Refer back to the Four I’s of Oppression Activity.



Note: This is an activity that can either be explained with the chart already created and posted or made into handouts, or you can work with your student club or other participants through dialogue with the participants.

Adapted from Making the Peace by Kivel and Creighton.



EXPLORING POWER AND PRIVILEGE

Purpose: This exercise will explore the meaning of power and privilege while uncovering ways in which we all contribute to the systems that uphold power and privilege within our school, community, and society as a whole.

Materials: Four pieces of flip-chart paper, blank paper, Post-it notes

Estimated Time: 45-60 min.



Directions:

1. Ask the group what the word “power” means to them. Encourage participants to take a moment to really think about this question before answering. As they do this, write the word “power” at the top of a piece of flip-chart paper and record participants’ responses on the flip chart.
2. After the brainstorming, share the definition from below and compare it to the ideas on power that the group has generated.

Review the Established Group Agreements before this activity.

WHAT IS POWER?

“The ability to get what you want.” Groups and individuals both pursue and exert power. On an individual level, people find power within themselves in different ways; what makes one person feel powerful may not make someone else feel the same way. For example, one person might find power in being tall, while another person might feel that being tall diminishes their ability to get what they want.

3. Give participants a stack of Post-it notes and ask them to write answers to the question, “What gives **you** power?”
4. Then take one of the pieces of chart paper and write “What Gives Us Power” at the top. Ask participants to read the notes they have written on what gives them power. Have a few volunteers group the Post-its by similarities.
5. Once everyone has shared, have participants break into small discussion groups. Use the following questions or create your own.
 - a. In what ways and from what sources do people get power?
 - b. What are some examples of power that comes from external sources (power from outside of oneself) and from internal sources (finding power within oneself)?
 - c. Do some people get power from both internal and external sources? Explain.
 - d. Within your group, what were the most common responses to the question of what gives people power?
6. Once the small-group discussions are done, bring everyone back together in a large group and ask, “What does the word ‘privilege’ mean?” Write a working definition for the word “privilege,” making sure that all participants have a chance to share their thoughts.
7. After the brainstorming, share the definition from below and compare it to the ideas on privilege that the group has generated.



Review the Power Chart Activity on page 19 for Ideas.

WHAT IS PRIVILEGE?

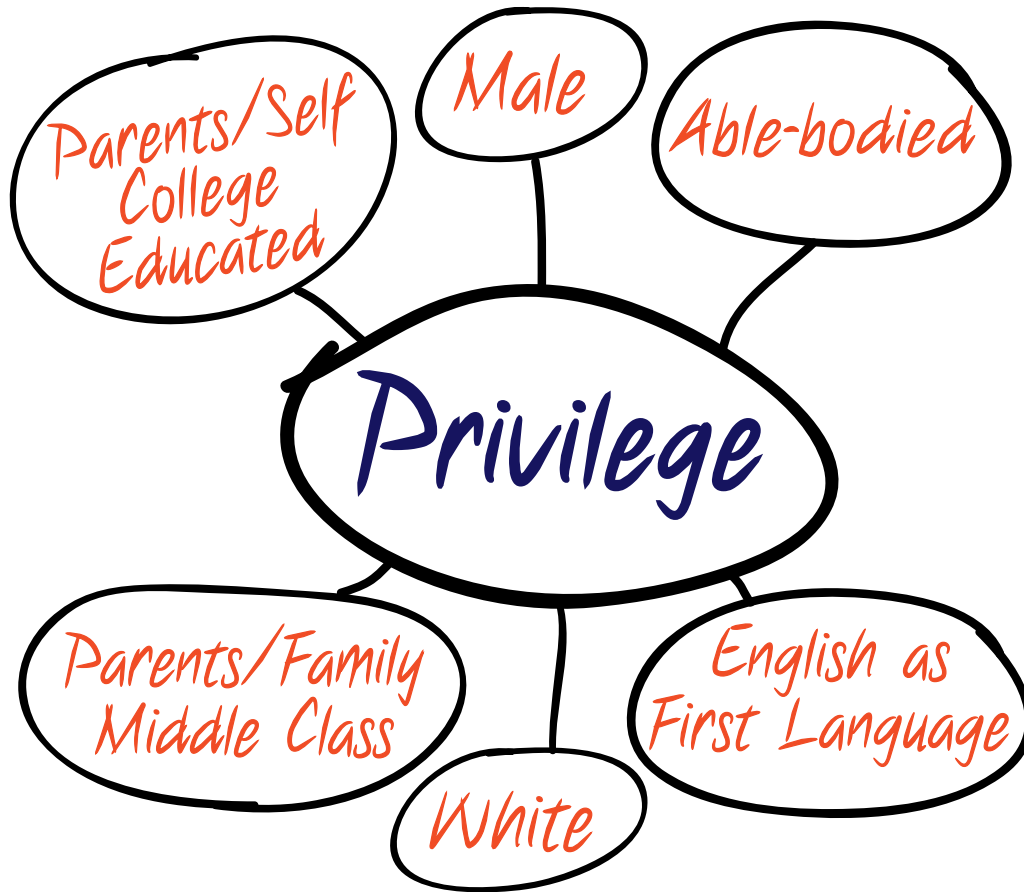
Privilege is a special advantage or right that a person is born into or acquires during their lifetime. Privilege is not available to everyone in society. Privilege and power are closely related; privilege often gives a person or group power over others.

continued next page →



EXPLORING POWER AND PRIVILEGE (cont.)

8. Next, pass out a sheet of paper to every participant and explain that they are going to create their own personal "privilege web." To do this, write the word "privilege" in the middle, circle the word, and then create a web of responses or other ideas around it.
9. Ask the participants to determine "ways that **you** have privilege in our society." Remind them that there are many different sources of privilege in our society – including speaking the English language, being able-bodied, being male, and so on.



10. Ask participants to share their webs only if they are comfortable doing so, and remind everyone that they have the option to pass.
11. Once everyone who wants to has shared, discuss the following questions with the group:
 - a. In what situations and contexts are you most aware of your own privilege?
 - b. In what situations and contexts are you most aware of your own power?
 - c. What is the difference between privilege and power?
 - d. Whether consciously or unconsciously, how have you used your privilege, both as an individual and as a member of various groups?
 - e. How do you acknowledge that you have privilege or that you don't have privilege?
 - f. How do you feel talking about power and privilege? Why?

Adapted from GLSEN's Jump-Start Guide: Examining Power, Privilege, and Oppression.



DOING ANTI-OPPRESSION WORK

Purpose: Once your group has a better understanding of power, privilege, and oppression, it is time to bring focus to creating an anti-oppressive student club and school community. It is important to keep in mind that this activity will look different for participants who have privilege and for those who do not have privilege.

Materials:
Chart paper, markers,
scrap paper

Estimated Time:
25 min.



Directions:

1. As a large group, brainstorm three to five reasons why it is important to make student clubs, school environments, and community spaces safe for, and inclusive of, all students.
2. Next, have participants break into pairs and give each pair a sheet of chart paper and a marker. Ask them to think back to the Four I's of Oppression Activity and specifically to the concept of interpersonal oppression.
3. Have the pairs discuss ways in which your student club has or may have been oppressive. Examples: Are the discussions always inclusive of the younger members of your group, or do the older participants dominate meetings? Do you regularly address trans* issues? Do you acknowledge straight allies? Are assumptions made about participants' economic status and their ability to pay for and participate in activities that involve spending money?
4. Next, ask the pairs to brainstorm concrete ways your student club or community group could work to counter oppression and make spaces safer for all students. After giving the pairs ten minutes, have everyone come back together and invite each pair to share their ideas and suggestions with the rest of the group and discuss. Your group is encouraged to discuss how they can implement change in their GSA and in the school.

Review your Established Group Agreements and Complete the Four I's of Oppression Activity before beginning this activity.

PUT IT INTO ACTION

You have now been introduced to concepts, explored individual experiences, and unpacked systems that contribute to the inequality occurring in our schools and communities. You have either made your way from the first page to here or used the guide in your own unique way. Regardless, it is time to take what you have learned and put it into action. We encourage you to advocate in your schools and communities to find what is broken and work together to fix it. In the section Taking Action, we provide ideas and activities for putting your knowledge to work.

Try:

- Game of Life (page 27);
- Flex Your Muscles (page 25); or
- Dissolving Stereotypes (page 27)

Adapted from GLSEN's Jump-Start Guide: Examining Power, Privilege, and Oppression.

TAKE ACTION

In this piece of the guide, we have labeled the activities as social, educational, and activist (or a combination). This arrangement is to show the varying degrees to which we can take action and to accommodate the capacity of your GSA. The fact of the matter is that there are a number of ways to generate real and sustainable change. How will your club engage people?

Social



Being an advocate or promoting justice can be a fun experience! Social methods can introduce people to issues they were unaware of and open the door to discussion and engagement.

Educational



A proven means of obtaining and maintaining social change is through educating ourselves and those around us. It serves communities across the board to have peers and teachers educated about issues such as bullying, the School-to-Prison Pipeline, power, privilege, and oppression.

Activist



Activism is going a step beyond socializing and educating around a given issue and exudes an expectation of actual change. This can be through inclusive curriculum, school policy, and agreement with students and schools or districts, to name a few.



START AT "HOME"

One of the simplest things we can do is be aware of the issues and then have a group or organizational mission be fully inclusive, advocate against injustice, and be an ally to our allies. This in and of itself speaks volumes about what your group represents as well as promoting an overall goal of full equality.

These following steps are just small measures your GSA can take to ensure that it is truly working towards justice for all:

- Enumerate the words race, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, etc., as groups of people who are welcomed and affirmed in your group's bylaws and value statements (See *Get it Started* Resource at www.cogsanetwork.org.)
- Make a GSA pledge and sustain it through leadership and actions. See example pledge on our website at www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice (see *Be an Ally, Make the Pledge* Activity on pg. 26). Once a pledge is created, have all group members sign it and hang up at events and meetings as a reminder of your GSA's dedication to social and educational justice.
- Collaborate with other student clubs and community organizations with a mission of cross messaging, promoting teamwork, and building bonds between allied forces.
- Be inclusive of oppressed groups when doing local and national GSA campaigns. (See *A Simple Addition* below for suggestions.)



A SIMPLE ADDITION

The action is in the title. A great way to acknowledge and bring attention to social injustice is by being sure that you are providing information to those around you.

You should work with your group members to reflect upon your discussions, events, and activities and determine how inclusive they are of multiple identities. There are a ton of resources available, and we have provided some below.

- Celebrate the contributions of LGBTQ people of color during Black History Month: www.glaad.org/publications/blackhistorymonthkit.
- Coming Out Day, Day of Silence, Ally Week, and Transgender Day of Visibility: These nationally recognized events are opportunities to take action and make your messages, events, and outreach inclusive of all members of the LGBTQ and ally community.
- Organize a display of materials (books, videos, music, research, organizations, etc.) in your school or library that highlights people of color, transgender folk, or other marginalized identities within the LGBTQ community.
- Design your own means of addressing the intersectionality of our communities.



Even though we call it *A Simple Addition*, the impact of being a group that focuses on inclusivity and works to address social inequality and institutional oppression is incredibly important.

See www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for links and printable materials.

HAVE FUN AND BE CREATIVE

There is no rule that working for social justice means that you cannot enjoy and express yourself. Below are a few suggestions for your GSA to make a difference while having fun and expressing your individuality.

- Show a film: pick a film from our list on our website or find your own and show it!
**If you wish to host a discussion after viewing the film, see page 28 on how to host a movie discussion.
- Host an art show or performance: Pick a theme (see www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for ideas) and set it up!
- Record (video, written, photos, etc.) personal stories about the experiences of students in your school to share with educators, community members, and organizations.
- Have a flare for drama? Write and rehearse a skit or play on topics explored in this guide.
- Use social media. Post articles, videos, and your events to your website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other social networking pages. Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/coloradogsanetwork> to see what we are posting.



Sometimes in the school or community, the opportunity arises for your group to do what is called “tabling.” This is an opportunity for your group to let people know about what you are doing and how you can be a resource to others or how others can be a resource to you. Bring information about your group, buttons, stickers, and candy; anything to draw people in.

FLEX YOUR MUSCLES

Test your organizing skills! Create or download fliers on the School-to-Prison Pipeline and other types of educational and social injustices, then distribute them. Practice approaching people and engaging them in conversation on the problem; visit www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for resources.

Work with teachers and academic departments to create and distribute a school-wide survey on school safety, discipline, and/or other experiences of institutional and interpersonal oppression. Visit www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for ideas and suggestions.

Petition writing is an effective tool in showing school and community support. When you meet with your school administration, staff, school board, or local officials, a list of people who show concern about racial/educational justice can provide a strong justification for your argument. Be sure that you are following existing school and district rules before proceeding, and then use the Sample Petition in the Appendix to create your own.

Schedule a meeting with your principal, school board, and/or City Council members to tell them about the experiences of LGBTQ youth of color, the existence of school pushout, and other issues that have surfaced as your group members have explored varying aspects of institutional and interpersonal oppression. You can ask them to hold a hearing on school safety, support funding for alternative school safety programs, or promote and adopt the Smart School Discipline Law and the Accountability Campaign through Padres & Jóvenes Unidos (<http://www.padresunidos.org/end-school-jail-track>).





BE AN ALLY, MAKE THE PLEDGE

Purpose: This activity will help you review what an ally is, the risks and benefits involved, and how to find an appropriate way to take action. All of these steps will help to produce and sustain real change within your student club – as well as the school and community.

Materials: Chart paper, marker, scrap paper, Post-it notes

Estimated Time: 45-60 min.



Directions:

1. Explain to participants that in order to build alliances, we have to become allies both to ourselves and to one another, often across differences.
2. Ask participants to partner with someone to discuss and write down what the word “ally” means to them.
3. After about five minutes, write the word “Ally” at the top of a piece of chart paper. Invite participants to share what they wrote down or talked about. Record all answers on the chart paper. Feel free to share the definition below after group brainstorming:

What is an ally?

An ally is a member of a privileged group who takes a stand against oppression.

Examples of allies include:

4. Once people have shared, ask the group to “think about a time when you wanted someone to be there for you because you were in trouble or needed help in some way. What kind of support could you have used from someone at that time?”
5. On a piece of chart paper, write “Qualities of an Ally” and have the group brainstorm on the qualities of an ally and list them on the chart.
6. Next, ask participants to take a few minutes to think about how they could be allies to two different groups of oppressed people, and have participants write their responses on Post-it notes and affix the notes to a sheet of chart paper labeled “How to Be an Ally”.
7. Once everyone has posted their notes, ask participants to explain how they are going to be allies. (Use these suggestions in your GSA’s mission and activities.)
8. Read the Ally Pledge: I promise to be an ally to myself, my peers, and anyone under attack. I promise to help break the cycle of discrimination and harassment, physical and otherwise, that is harming the lives of the less powerful in our society.
9. Have the group discuss whether they can commit to the pledge and what might be difficult about keeping it. Ask “in what situations do you think it could be hard to keep the pledge to yourself, your peers, or others?”

Intervening in a situation when someone is being hurt is dangerous. Sometimes you may have to decide to go get help rather than intervening yourself. There is no one right way to be an ally.

10. To end the activity, tell everyone to take two Post-it notes from the chart that are not their own, and encourage group members to keep these notes with them as reminder of the different ways in which we can all be allies to each other. You can also use the pledge or create your own and pass it out to your members.

Visit www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for optional discussion questions.

Adapted from GLSEN’s Jump-Start Guide: Examining Power, Privilege, and Oppression and Young Women’s Lives by Nell Myhand and Paul Kivel.

DISSOLVING STEREOTYPES

Purpose: This particular activity can be a very powerful one. It can be used effectively with students of all ages, teachers, and/or community members to explore experiences with stereotypes and hurtful words while learning ways to “dissolve” the hurt they cause.

Materials: Rice or printed paper (enough pieces for all participants), water-soluble markers, small bins filled with water (bucket, small pool, etc.)

Estimated Time: 45-60 min.



Directions:

1. Provide participants with paper and markers. Ask each person to privately reflect on their own experiences with being called a hurtful name or being labeled with a stereotype.
2. Invite participants to write down that hurtful word, label, or experience on the paper.
3. Either in small groups or as one large group, participants should come forward to place their paper in the water and allow the stereotype or hurtful name to be dissolved in the water. Invite participants to share what they wrote on the paper, if they wish, before dissolving it in the water.
4. Feel free to show or view the video created by Not in Our Town at <http://youtu.be/7RgumwT-J-U>.
5. Conclude the activity using some or all of the following questions:
 - a. How did you feel recalling and writing down the hurtful words/labels? Were you surprised by what came to mind?
 - b. How did it feel to put these words in the water and watch them disappear?
 - c. What do you think is the purpose of the activity? What will you take away from this experience?
6. If you have the resources and permission needed, you can record the activity and then share it with others in your school and community.

Adapted from resources by Not in Our Schools and Facing History and Ourselves.

ACT TO EDUCATE

Host a workshop or training session for your school and/or community. Invite One Colorado to your school, youth group, or community organization to do a workshop on the School-to-Prison Pipeline, intersecting identities, school policies, or starting a GSA. **- or -**

Facilitate “The Game of K-12 LIFE” from The Advancement Project and National GSA Network. This is an educational/experiential game around the consequences of school pushout and is a fun way to explore a topic that sometimes.



Purpose: An interactive game in which the players have a goal of graduating from high school. The trick is that your fate lies in the hands of school policies and social norms (ideological and institutional oppression). Roll of the dice and discover how our systems are designed to benefit some and target others.

Materials: 2 large six-sided dice, game instructions and PowerPoint presentation (available for download at www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice)

Estimated Time: 30-45 min.





MOVIE VIEWING AND DISCUSSION

Purpose: Watching films is a great tool to inform people of an issue, and a way to take it a step further is to engage in discussions around the topics covered in this guide.

Materials: Location, movie, prepared discussion questions

Estimated Time: Length of film plus 30-45 min. for discussion



Directions:

1. The first step will be to select a film and have your GSA view it in advance. The goal is to ensure that you have a firm understanding of the film's messages before facilitating a discussion about it. While previewing the film, you should take notes on the points you would like to make while introducing the film, as well as record questions or issues that may arise, or which you might want to mention.
2. Once you have selected and previewed the film, written a brief introduction, and prepared a list of discussion questions, you are all set to schedule the event and invite your participants. You can show the film to your student club, in a class, open it to the school, or even show it in the community.
3. The discussion you generate will vary with each movie you view, but here are a few tips for facilitating: introduce the movie by familiarizing participants to the subject, giving some key points and stating your objective in presenting this particular movie. (3-5 min.)
4. Following the viewing, begin by asking specific questions about the content of the film, and give viewers a chance to express their feelings. If someone makes a statement, ask if others agree or disagree (feel free to jot down or summarize the answers you are given): (5-10 min.)
 - What is your overall reaction to the film?
 - How were you feeling, or what went through your mind, when you saw (insert scene from film)?
5. Further discussion questions: (15-20+ min.)
 - What does this mean for us as a student group/school/community?
 - Where do we see signs of this issue (or its effects) in our own student group/school/community?
 - How does this issue relate to other issues?
 - What can we do about it?
 - Add questions that you feel would benefit a discussion on the film/topic.

Visit www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for a list of recommended movies, films, and videos.

HOST A PANEL DISCUSSION

Purpose: Hosting a panel discussion is a great way to get people talking about social and educational justice. A panel discussion allows the audience to hear unique perspectives from each panelist and encourages community dialogue.

Materials: Room or auditorium, proper audio/visual equipment, panel members

Estimated Time: 45-60 min.



Directions:

1. Identify a topic/issue that the panel discussion will be based on (consider showing brief video/clip on selected topic).
2. Choose the size of your panel. An ideal panel size is three to five participants.
3. Choose the panelists who will speak during the discussion. For a rich discussion, include individuals who represent diverse backgrounds and opinions (including race, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.).
4. Choose the moderator(s) for the panel; this can be a student or teacher who is involved with the GSA. This person should:
 - a. Have a good understanding of the topic and should be able to guide the conversation.
 - b. Understand that his or her role is to introduce the panelists, to ask the panelists several questions, and to create a smooth transition between questions.
 - c. Moderate any potential disputes among panelists, immediately address any offensive comments from panelists and audience members, and keep track of the length of responses, making sure that the length of the panel discussion doesn't exceed the time limit.
5. Write out several questions that you want to ask your panelists. You'll have the moderator ask these questions to get the discussion started. Be sure to ask open-ended questions, such as "who," "what," "when," "where," "why," and "how," rather than questions that simply require a yes or no answer.
6. Contact the panelists and confirm that they can attend. Send them reminders about the time, date, and the other panelists, as well as the location of the event. Go over the event schedule and your expectations of them, and share with them the questions they'll be asked.
7. Before the panel, you'll want to promote the event in school and the community.
8. After your successful event, share pictures and write-ups about how the panel went. Encourage others to share their experiences with you and let them know how they can get involved in your GSA.

Present Group Agreement/Expectations to entire group or develop before panel.



You should allow time at the end of the panel for the panelists to take questions from the audience.

Adapted from iHollaback!



LETTER-WRITING CAMPAIGN

Purpose: A letter-writing campaign allows your efforts to be brought to the attention of people who otherwise may be unaware of your concerns. Letter writing to local papers, school administrators, boards, districts, and lawmakers can inform or change an important vote or decision.

Materials: Sample letter, list of names, titles, and addresses of recipients, paper, pens, envelopes, stamps

Estimated Time:
N/A



Directions:

1. Provide participants with a sample letter that includes key points to mention (see Appendix).
2. A good, effective letter will consist of these key components (use to draft your sample letter too):
 - a. Description of the issue in plain language.
 - b. A concise, simple background of the problem – consider the reader’s point of view/knowledge.
 - c. Be clear about what you want the recipient of the letter to do about the issue.
 - d. Be polite; don’t be too aggressive, and address the recipients in a respectable way.
 - e. Place name, address, and ways to contact you (phone/email) in the letter AND on the envelope.
 - f. Facts carry a lot more weight than “because it’s bad” or “because I like it.”
3. Determine who should get your letter and identify those people. The choice is up to you, but school officials are usually the best place to start. Use your school/district website to find information about school officials. If you are writing about your school, be sure to also send a copy to your school board president (your school secretary has this information).



Doing these things ahead of time will allow you to talk to more people, and the convenience of having things ready to go will draw people in.

HOST A LETTER-WRITING PARTY AND BRING:

- a. Copies of the sample letter
- b. Correct addresses of newspapers
- c. Correct addresses and names of lawmakers
- d. Envelopes with recipient addresses
- e. Pens and stamps
- f. Literature about your organization
- g. A few volunteers who can talk about the issues with people who drop in

See Sample Letter on page 35 in the Appendix as a format for creating your own.

Write letters to both school/community officials and newspapers.

Keep a copy for yourselves if possible.

Be genuine and make it yours! Follow the basic structure rules of a formal letter, but personalize the letter.

Thank people for writing or taking supplies home to write letters.

Adapted from Michigan Land Use Institute and Dosomething.org.

THIS IS NOT THE END

Social justice work is never done, as you have learned through activities such as the Four I's of Oppression, Power Chart, Doing Anti-Oppression Work, and the Microaggression Activity. We are working within a system that is founded on keeping certain group of people in power and oppressing those who are considered "others." However, social action can generate change. With that said, we will commit to continue working together to build more inclusive and affirming environments. We will make our communities and allegiances across identities stronger than ever. The objective is to change the power balance and to encourage fair and just treatment of all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender expression, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, immigration status, or any other aspect of their whole identity. Creating and maintaining positive change in our schools lies in your hands, and it is important that you are empowered with knowledge, tools, and allies to complete the work. Stay tuned and connected to the Colorado GSA Network and One Colorado for technical assistance, support, opportunities, updates, events, supplemental activities, and resources.

www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice

www.one-colorado.org

303-396-6172

CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Padres y Jóvenes Unidos: Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline in Colorado

www.padresunidos.org/campaigns

<http://youtu.be/UU9iMQLan8A>

Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Track <http://safequalityschools.org/>

Dignity in Schools www.dignityinschools.org/

GSA Network/Two Wrongs Don't Make a Right

www.gsanetwork.org/news/blog/two-wrongs-dont-make-right/06/26/12

Books Not Bars http://www.padresunidos.org/sites/default/files/BooksNotBars_StudentsForSafeFairSchools_0.pdf



APPENDIX

DEFINITIONS:

Ableism: A pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion of people with disabilities. Ableism operates on individual, institutional, and cultural levels to privilege able-bodied people.

Ally: A person who supports marginalized, silenced, or less privileged groups without actually being a member of those groups. This includes educating oneself and others, providing support to individuals, and challenging oppressive remarks, behaviors, policies, and institutional structures. This person will often directly confront and challenge systems of oppression.

Anti-Semitism: Prejudice and/or discrimination, either personally or institutionally, against Semitic people (specifically Jews). This can be based on hatred against Jews because of their religious beliefs, their perceived group mentality, and sometimes on the erroneous belief that Jews are a "race."

Assimilation: A process by which members of an ethnic minority group lose cultural characteristics that distinguish them from the dominant cultural group or take on the cultural characteristics of another group.

Cisgender: A concept in queer studies that labels persons who are not transgender as something other than simply "normal." That is, it provides a name for a gender identity or performance in a gender role that society considers to match or be appropriate for one's assigned sex.

Classism: The systemic oppression of poor and working people by those who control resources (including jobs, wages, education, housing, food, services, medicine, and cultural definitions). Classism is held in place by a system of beliefs that rank people according to economic status, "breeding," institutional power, occupation, and level of education.

Discrimination: Unequal treatment of people based on their membership in a group. In contrast to prejudice, discrimination is a behavior. To discriminate is to treat a person not on the basis of their intrinsic individual qualities, but on the basis of a prejudgment about a group. Discrimination can be either *de jure* (legal, as in segregation laws) or *de facto* (discrimination in fact without legal sanction).

Educational Justice: The idea that all children deserve equal access to a quality education, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and socio-economic status.

Ethnicity: A group of people thought to have (or who believe they have) a common way of thinking, feeling, and acting, based on a shared common geographic and social history.

Ethnocentrism: An attitude that one's own culture, society, or group is inherently superior to all others. Judging other cultures by your own cultural standards and believing that since other cultures are different, they are therefore inferior. Ethnocentrism means an inability to appreciate others whose culture may include a different racial group, ethnic group, religion, morality, language, political system, economic system, etc. It also means an inability to see the common humanity and human condition of all women and men in all cultures and societies beneath the surface variations in social and cultural traditions.

Hegemony: The imposition of a dominant group's ideology onto everyone in society

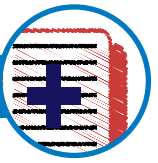
Heterosexism: The concept that heterosexuality and only heterosexuality is natural, normal, superior, and required. This can refer to any institution or belief system that excludes or makes invisible questioning, lesbian, nonlabeling, bisexual, transgender, queer, and gay people, as well as any system that constructs queer sexualities as deviant, wrong, or immoral. Heterosexism is deeply rooted in the culture and institutions in our society. Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia all stem from and are supported by heterosexism. Heterosexism enforces and is enforced by a binary gender system. Binaries similarly enforce racism and other systems of power.

Homophobia: The fear or hatred of gays, lesbians, or queer-identified people in general. This can be manifested as an intense dislike or rejection of such people, or violent actions against them.

Ideology: Refers to the process of mystifying social relations so that they appear natural. The shared ideas of a society that are reinforced throughout all of the institutions and thus are very hard to avoid believing.

Immigrant: A person who comes to live permanently in a country outside of the country he or she was born in.

Inclusion: A situation that exists when disadvantaged communities and designated group members share power and decision making at all levels in projects, programs, and institutions.



Ideological Oppression: At the core of any oppressive system is the idea that one group is somehow better than another, and this idea gets elaborated in a number of ways – more intelligent, harder working, stronger, more capable, more deserving, chosen, superior, etc. The dominant group holds this idea about itself and then applies opposing qualities to the other group – stupid, lazy, weak, incompetent, worthless, less deserving, etc.

Internalized Oppression: The last of the four I's is one that works within the groups of people who are affected the most by the mistreatment, the oppressed. As a result of the ideology of inferiority, seeing it reflected in our institutions, and experiencing clearly identifiable discrimination from members of the dominant group, members of oppressed groups (identities) eventually come to believe the negative messages about themselves. If we are told we are stupid and worthless and have been treated as such our whole lives, then it is not surprising that we could come to believe it.

Interpersonal/Intergroup Oppression: The belief that one group is superior to another that is then structured into our institutions, then gives permission and reinforcement for individuals of the dominant group to personally disrespect or mistreat individuals who are members of oppressed groups. These are the behaviors that happen in person-to-person, group-to-person, and person-to-group; jokes, stereotypes, verbal, physical and sexual assault, harassment, violence, belittling, ignoring, etc. **Most people in a dominant group are not consciously oppressive and have internalized the messages about other groups and believe that their attitudes are justified or even supported.*

Institutional Oppression: The idea that one group is better than another then becomes embedded in our social institutions – laws, legal systems, police practice, education system and schools, hiring policies, public policies, housing, media images, political power, etc.

Intersectionality: A concept often used to describe the ways in which oppressive institutions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, etc.) are interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another.

Intersections of Oppression: These occur when an individual is defined by more than one oppressed element of their identity. Often these intersections are used to further oppress an individual; this manifests frequently in situations where an individual is forced to choose one oppressed element of their identity over another for political reasons.

Marginalization: The process whereby something or someone is pushed to the edge of a group and accorded lesser importance. This is predominantly a social phenomenon by which a minority or subgroup is excluded, and their needs or desires ignored.

Microaggression: Microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of minority groups.

Minority Group: Any group that is socially defined as different from the dominant group in society, is at a power disadvantage, receives less than its proportionate share of scarce resources due to its power disadvantage, and finds its differential treatment justified in terms of socially defined differences.

Nationality: A group of people thought to have (or who believe they have) a common geopolitical identity.

Oppression: The domination of certain individuals or groups by others through the use of physical, psychological, social, cultural, or economic force. Oppression occurs at the group or macro level, and goes well beyond individuals. Sexism, racism, classism, ableism, and heterosexism are forms of oppression. The systematic mistreatment of people because of their membership in a group.

People of Color: The term people of color was adopted to refer to all people who are not considered “white” by “white people” in a positive way. In American “racial” terms, it refers to anyone who claims other than European ancestry on either side of their family.

Policies and Practices: Harsh punishment, suspensions, expulsions, police referral, ticketing, probation, etc.

Power: The ability to exercise control. Having access to systems and resources as legitimated by individuals and societal institutions.

Prejudice: An attitude toward a person or group, formed without just grounds or sufficient knowledge that will not be likely to change in spite of new evidence or contrary argument. Prejudice is an attitude.

continued next page →



DEFINITIONS (cont.)

Privilege: In this guide the type of privilege being referred to is that which is an unearned advantage that works to systematically overempower certain groups in society/the world. Privilege assigns dominance simply based on gender, race, sexuality, and nationality, among other factors of identity. Privilege is an invisible package of unearned assets that members of privileged groups can count on cashing in on every day, but about which they are meant to remain oblivious.

Race: A specious classification of human beings created by white Europeans. Race has no genetic or scientific foundation. However, it assigns human worth and social status using “white” as the model of humanity for the purpose of establishing and maintaining racism, power, and privilege. Thus, race is socially constructed but has real impacts on people’s everyday lives.

Racial Justice: A proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for people of color.

Racial Profiling: Refers to the discriminatory practice by school officials and law enforcement of targeting individuals for suspicion of behavior, action, or crime based on the individual’s race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin.

Racism: A system in which one group of people exercises power over another on the basis of skin color; an implicit or explicit set of beliefs, erroneous assumptions, and actions based on an ideology of the inherent superiority of one racial group over another, and evident in organizational or institutional structures and programs as well as in individual thought or behavior patterns.

Refugee: A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.

School-to-Prison Pipeline: The policies and practices that push our nation’s schoolchildren, especially our most at-risk children, out of classrooms and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. This pipeline reflects the prioritization of incarceration over education.

Sexism: The systemic oppression of women by men, under patriarchy. Sexism is based on the belief that men are inherently superior to women. Sexism encompasses economic, political, social, and institutional actions and beliefs that perpetuate an unequal distribution of privileges, resources, and power between men and women.

Social Justice: Social justice is the virtue that guides us in creating those organized human interactions we call institutions. In turn, social institutions, when justly organized, provide us with access to what is good for the person, both individually and in our associations with others. Social justice also imposes on each of us a personal responsibility to work with others to design and continually perfect our institutions as tools for personal and social development.

Stereotype: To believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same.

Tokenizing: The action of making a member of a marginalized and/or oppressed group a spokesperson for that entire group, usually for the benefit of a larger, more privileged group.

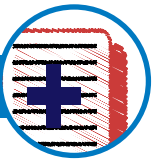
Transphobia: An irrational fear of, and/or hostility towards, people who are transgender or who otherwise transgress traditional gender norms. Because lesbians and gay men often transgress gender norms, it is often associated with homophobia.

Triggers: A trigger is an offhand comment in a discussion or written document that can cause an individual to feel diminished, threatened, discounted, attacked, or stereotyped. This “trigger” is an emotional response; while the individual does not feel personally threatened, an aspect of the person’s social identity (or the social identity of members of another social group) feels violated. Triggers are not generic; a statement that elicits no emotional response in some people may produce strong emotions in others.

Whiteness: A social construction that has created a racial hierarchy that has shaped all of the social, cultural, educational, political, and economic institutions of society. Whiteness is linked to domination and is a form of race privilege invisible to white people who are not conscious of its power.

Xenophobia: An excessive and irrational fear of anything foreign. This fear is most often of foreign people, cultures, etc. People who are xenophobic may display fear or even anger toward others who are foreign.

Zero Tolerance: The practice of applying mandatory enforcement policies for specific offenses. With zero-tolerance policies, persons in authority are compelled to act without regard to severity, circumstance, and intent of specific offenses. These policies have created a culture of arresting students. Misdeeds that once landed kids in detention now land them in the criminal justice system.



SAMPLE FOR LETTER-WRITING CAMPAIGN

May 15, 2014

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
455 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
RE: Safe Space for Youth



See www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for information about addressing letters for senators and representatives.

Dear Senator Brown,

I am a resident of Springdom, Ohio, and I am writing because there is a terrible lack of safe places for youth in my community.

Springdom's mayor and council are proposing a town-wide ordinance requiring that people under the age of 18 be accompanied by an adult while shopping at the Springdom Mega-Mall. They borrowed the idea from other communities that have passed similar rules in response to incidents such as kids getting into minor fights on mall property. Mayor Jackson believes that by requiring youth to be accompanied by chaperones, she will eliminate this problem. Some of the strongest arguments against the idea are that it will dramatically reduce business and it may actually increase danger – if kids can't go to the mall, they'll find other, not-so-well-guarded places to hang out.

As a young, concerned citizen of Springdom, I agree that youth violence at the mall is a big problem for both kids and adults, but I think the best way to address this matter is by attacking it at its root. To be perfectly honest, there is nothing to do in Springdom after school lets out. That's why kids go to the mall! The youth of Springdom need a cool, safe space where they can go after school to hang. I've spoken with several friends and teachers, and we all agree that Springdom would benefit greatly from the addition of a community space offering athletics, art, and other activities so that kids can socialize in a constructive manner.

Specifically, I am writing to ask you to promote the maintenance of community spaces and the creation of more parks and nature trails. Springdom, for one, has thick woodlands. If you worked with the Ohio Parks Department to create running and biking trails in communities such as Springdom, everyone, not only the youth, would benefit greatly. I know that I for one, speaking as a youth and concerned citizen, would gain considerably from this program.

Thank you for considering this matter.

Sincerely,

(your handwritten signature)

Betsey Lopez

CC: So-and-so, Jr., Springdom school board president



APPENDIX

SAMPLE PETITION

TO THE [insert name of school/district/or local official]

The petition of certain [students/faculty/and/or community] of [insert school/district/city name/or state name] draws to the attention of the [insert name of school administration/school district/or local government]

In 1-2 sentences, present your information/subject **(What issue are you raising?)**

The petitioners therefore request that... [in 2-3 sentences, assert your requests] **(What solution are you proposing?)**

NAME <i>(Please print name)</i>	SIGNATURE <i>(Petitioner must sign his/her name)</i>	EMAIL ADDRESS <i>(Please write full email address)</i>

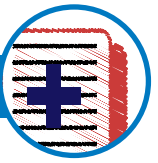


See www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for a downloadable form to use.

SAMPLE POWER CHART



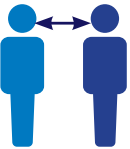

POWER GROUPS	"ISM"	TARGET GROUP
White People	Racism	People of Color
Men	Sexism	Women, Trans* Folk
Adults/Parents	Adultism	Kids, Young Adults
Adults, Young People	Ageism	Senior Citizens
U.S. Born	Xenophobia	Immigrants
Wealthy	Classism	Poor, Working Class
Able-bodied	Ableism	Disabled
Heterosexuals	Heterosexism/Homophobia	Gays and Lesbians
Christians	Sectarianism/ Anti-Semitism When Against Jews	Non-Christians
Skinny/Fit	Sizeism	Plus-Size, Over weight
Educated		Uneducated
Bosses/Employers		Workers/Employees

***Do not fill in the chart; leave that to the participants. Use this as a reference.**



EXAMPLE 4 I'S OF OPPRESSION

TOPIC: HETEROSEXISM

 <h3>Ideological</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being gay is wrong/unnatural • Relationships should only be between a man and woman • Violates tradition • And many more ... 	 <h3>Institutional</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reparative therapy • Marriage is limited by state and orientation • Media images of couples are man and woman • Etc. ...
 <h3>Interpersonal</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling someone it is a phase or they need to be fixed • Slurs (that's so gay, sissy, etc.) • Disowning or ending relationships because someone is gay • Just a few of the many examples ... 	 <h3>Internalized</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased levels of depression • Decreased self-esteem • Hiding one's identity • Among many other internal consequences ...



MICROAGGRESSION VERSION A

Draw a line connecting the statements in the first column with all the possible implications in the second column. Each may connect with more than one implication. Be ready to explain each choice. Think critically about how a person could interpret these statements as a put-down. Go through and change four statements in Column 1 to be less harmful and offensive.

Column #1

"Don't be such a sissy."

"Well, of course you have a bad relationship with your parents, you're gay."

"You speak English well."

"America is a melting pot."

"I don't see color."

"I have black friends, so ..."

"Watch blacks when they come in; they normally shoplift."

Asking a black student what "black people think" about a situation.

"That's retarded."

"That's so ghetto."

Column #2

Feminine traits are undesirable.

You are not man enough.

Classism does not affect your future.

Your sexual orientation is your only defining feature.

Being gay is unacceptable.

Being gay is unnatural.

People with mental disabilities are less important, likable, and competent.

There is no hope for you.

You don't belong.

You will not succeed.

Your cultural background makes you unintelligent.

It doesn't matter if you are impoverished.

Poor people should not be respected.

You must be lazy.

You are not deserving of high status.

Racism does not affect your future.

You look like a criminal.

You people are all the same.

I see you as your skin color only.

People of your race are unintelligent.

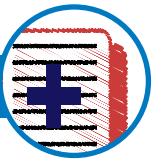
Your culture is your only defining feature.

Your upbringing does not matter.

Your experience is not important.

You are not American.

Society knows what is right and you are wrong.



MICROAGGRESSION VERSION B

Draw a line connecting the statements in the first column with all the possible implications in the second column. Each may connect with more than one implication. Be ready to explain each choice. Think critically about how a person could interpret these statements as a “put down”. Go through and change four statements in Column 1 to be less harmful and offensive.

Column #1

“You throw like a girl.”

“Where are you really from?”

Calling someone “trashy” or “classy.”

“You are a credit to your race.”

“Everyone can succeed if they try hard enough.”

Mistaking a person of color for a service worker.

Helping boys with math more than girls.

“That’s so gay.”

Assuming computer proficiency or access.

Being gay is “just a phase.”

Column #2

Feminine traits are undesirable.

You are not man enough.

Classism does not affect your future.

Your sexual orientation is your only defining feature.

Being gay is unacceptable.

Being gay is unnatural.

People with mental disabilities are less important, likable, and competent.

There is no hope for you.

You don’t belong.

You will not succeed.

Your cultural background makes you unintelligent.

It doesn’t matter if you are impoverished.

Poor people should not be respected.

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You are not American.

Society knows what is right and you are wrong.



Make It Safe
A Resource Guide for Schools
Combating Bullying,
Homophobia, and
Transphobia
in Schools

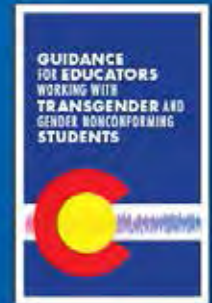


That's So Gay
Ending Bullying and
Harassment Against
LGBTQ Students
in Colorado
Schools

**ADDITIONAL
RESOURCES FROM
COLORADO GSA
NETWORK &
ONE COLORADO**



Get It Started
A Guide for
Developing
Gay-Straight
Alliances



**Guidance
for Educators
Working with
Transgender
and Gender
Nonconforming
Students**



**Colorado
GSA Network
Programming
Guide**

Go to www.cogsanetwork.org/GSAs4Justice for more information, ideas, and additional resources.

Colorado GSA Network
1490 Lafayette Street, Suite 304
Denver, CO 80218

www.cogsanetwork.org