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## Ready-Made Events for the 2016-2017 School Year

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Not sure what to do with your GSA or student club? Here are some ready-made days of action that can be used to organize an event, campaign, or display at your school.

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### ★ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender History Month – *Every October*

Did you know that October is LGBT History Month? LGBT people have made significant contributions to our culture and society, and there are tons of things that you and your GSA can do to uplift LGBT history at your school and create greater awareness about significant LGBT people and events.

Every year, [www.lgbthistorymonth.com](http://www.lgbthistorymonth.com) showcases a different person for each day of October. Visit their website to watch short videos and read bios for their LGBT history icons, dating back to 2007.

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### ★ National Coming Out Day – *October 11<sup>th</sup>*

National Coming Out Day (NCOD) is celebrated every October 11th. The day was born out of the 1987 LGBT March on Washington, D.C., when hundreds of thousands of Americans rallied to support equal rights for LGBTQ people. Today, NCOD events are held in hundreds of cities across the country and around the world. There are lots of things you can do to celebrate NCOD, including:

- ★ Invite speakers to come talk to your school/club about their coming out experiences
  - ★ Have a discussion with your GSA about coming out and how to do it safely
  - ★ Hold an event that allows people to “come out” as allies to the LGBTQ community
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### ★ Ally Week – *September 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016*

And speaking of allies...

Who can play a huge role in ending anti-LGBT bullying and harassment in our schools? Allies! Ally Week will be taking place from September 26<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> this year. What better way to kick off the school year than to have student clubs and GSAs identify and support allies in their school? Ally Week can be simple (passing out stickers to students who sign the ally pledge) or more advanced (planning an event or series of events throughout the week).

For more information about organizing Ally Week in your school, visit [www.allyweek.org](http://www.allyweek.org).

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★ Transgender Day of Remembrance – *November 20<sup>th</sup>*

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is held on November 20<sup>th</sup> every year and was established to memorialize those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice. The event is held to honor Rita Hester, whose murder in 1998 kicked off the “Remembering Our Dead” web project and a San Francisco candlelight vigil in 1999.

Please note that while this day was set aside to remember those who have been killed, it’s equally important to honor those who are still living and fighting for gender justice today. For ideas on how to organize a TDOR event in your school, check out: <http://tdor.info/> or <http://www.glaad.org/tdor>.

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★ World AIDS Day – *December 1<sup>st</sup>*

World AIDS day is held on December 1<sup>st</sup> every year and began in 1988 to increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education about the AIDS pandemic and its impact on the world stage.

To find out more information about HIV/AIDS or to get resources on how to organize events for World AIDS Day at your school, visit [www.worldaidsday.org](http://www.worldaidsday.org).

To download resources on how to talk to your GSA about HIV/AIDS and related topics, check out the “Doing Health Education” page on the GSAFE website here: [www.gsafewi.org/resources/for-youth-gsas/doing-health-education/](http://www.gsafewi.org/resources/for-youth-gsas/doing-health-education/)

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★ No Name-Calling Week – *January 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

No Name-Calling Week was inspired by the young adult novel [The Misfits](#) by James Howe. The book tells the story of four best friends trying to survive the seventh grade in the face of all too frequent taunts based on their weight, height, intelligence, and sexual orientation/gender expression. The friends create a new political party during student council elections and run on a platform aimed at wiping out name-calling of all kinds. In the end, the No-Name Party wins the support of the school's principal for their cause and their idea for a "No Name-Calling Day" at school.

Motivated by this simple yet powerful idea, the No Name-Calling Week Coalition created by GLSEN and Simon & Schuster Children's publishing, consisting of over 60 national partner organizations, organized an actual No Name-Calling Week in schools across the nation. Since then, No Name-Calling Week has been adopted by schools everywhere and has grown into one of the largest bullying-prevention initiatives in the country. No Name-Calling Week is particularly popular in middle school and elementary schools.

To find resources on how to organize No-Name Calling Week in your school, visit: <http://www.glsen.org/nonamecallingweek>

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★ National GSA Day – *February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

Thousands of Gay-Straight Alliances and LGBT groups have been forming in schools and colleges across America to try to put a stop to bullying, homophobia, transphobia and hate. These student organizations dare to create dialogue to improve lives. It is brave work and deserves to be recognized and celebrated.

GSA Day was originally created by the Iowa Pride Network to celebrate the impact that GSAs have had on our schools. In 2015, the theme of GSA Day was “GSA Day for Racial Justice”, and students from GSAs uploaded videos to YouTube, Twitter, and Vine to show their solidarity for the #BlackLivesMatter movement.

Visit [www.gsaday.org](http://www.gsaday.org) to learn more about this event.

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★ Day of Silence – *April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017*

The Day of Silence is a student-led day of action on which those who support making anti-LGBT bias unacceptable in schools take a day-long vow of silence to recognize and protest the discrimination and harassment -- in effect, the silencing -- experienced by LGBT students and their allies. Day of Silence has been around for twenty years now, and has become one of the largest student-lead days of action in the country.

Many great ideas on how you can organize a Day of Silence (or something similar) in your school can be found at [www.dayofsilence.org](http://www.dayofsilence.org).

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★ Words Hurt Week – *Any time you like!*

In 2010, a student who had attended GSAFE’s summer Leadership Training Institute took our idea for an “anti-slur task force” back to her school and worked with her GSA and club advisor to create a really fantastic weeklong event – Words Hurt Week.

Since then, GSAs all around Wisconsin have been working with other students clubs and school departments to organize similar events, intended to create greater awareness of the power of words – words that can be used to hurt or to heal.

If you are interested in organizing a Words Hurt event in your school, make sure you check out the “Words Hurt Organizing Manual” on the GSAFE website here:

[www.gsafewi.org/resources/for-youth-gsas/gsa-actions-events/](http://www.gsafewi.org/resources/for-youth-gsas/gsa-actions-events/)

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The truth is that any of the events listed above could be organized any time. The content and goals of the events are far more important than organizing them on the “official” dates.

We encourage GSAs to find out about events that other clubs and groups in their schools are organizing around, such as Martin Luther King Jr. Day, or the “Spread the Word to End the Word” campaign, and ask how you can support them. The goal would not be to take over the event, or to demand that LGBT issues be addressed within those events; rather, we feel that in order to truly create safer schools for all students, the GSA movement has a responsibility to address other issues of injustice, such as racism, sexism, and ableism.

***Here is a short list of other days of action and commemorations that GSAs could get involved with:***

**January**

Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Observed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every January

**February**

Black History Month

**March**

Women’s History Month

Spread the Word to End the Word - <http://www.r-word.org/> (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of March)

Transgender Day of Visibility – March 31<sup>st</sup>

**April**

Autism Awareness Month

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

**May**

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Mental Health Awareness Month

Jewish Heritage Awareness Month

International Workers’ Day – May 1<sup>st</sup>

**June**

LGBT Pride Month

**September**

National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15<sup>th</sup> – October 15<sup>th</sup>)

Celebrate Bisexuality Day – September 23<sup>rd</sup>

**October**

LGBT History Month

National Bullying Prevention Month

Asexual Awareness Week – Last week in October

Intersex Awareness Day – October 26<sup>th</sup>

**November**

Native American Heritage Month

**December**

National AIDS Awareness Month

For any help or support you need around a day of action you’re organizing at your school, contact Tim Michael at **(608)661-4141** or email **[tim@gsafewi.org](mailto:tim@gsafewi.org)**.