

Gay-Straight Alliances in Saskatchewan Schools

Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) are school clubs/groups for students who think that bullying, harassment and discrimination against gender and sexually diverse people is wrong. GSAs are open to all students and members to work together to create safe and supportive environments for all students.

GSAs also provide a place for all students to meet, make friends and talk about issues specific to gender and sexually diversity. There is no expectation to reveal one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

GSAs create safe and accepting environments by communicating that prejudice and victimization will not be tolerated. Students attending schools that have GSAs are less likely to hear homophobic comments, and report feeling safer and less harassed because of their involvement with GSAs.

Remember that the creation and maintenance of GSAs is just one step, of many, to making your school a better, safer and more accepting place.

How do I start a GSA in my school?

Many Saskatchewan schools have active GSAs. For other schools, [starting a GSA](#) may be a new opportunity. Some points to consider as you create a GSA include:

- Talk to a peer(s) who might be interested in joining you in starting a GSA. Having someone to work with right from the start will make the next steps easier.
- Talk to school staff members whom you believe will be supportive and helpful.
- Ask one or two of your teachers to be the adult supervisor(s). Share with them why you want to create a GSA.
- Talk with the adult advisor about the school division's procedures/policies for starting any kind of club/group in a school. Be sure to follow these same procedures.
- Review various websites that provide information about creating and sustaining GSAs in schools.
- Schedule a time, with your adult advisor, to talk with your principal or vice principal. Share what you know and have learned about GSAs and about your school division's policies/procedures regarding student clubs.
- Create a plan for spreading the word that a school-based GSA is being formed.
- Talk with students who might be interested in attending meetings. Once you have a few students interested, have them invite other students they know.
- Find a meeting place in your school. Having a comfortable and private location will give members a sense of security and comfort.

How do I plan the first meeting?

- Talk with your adult advisor as you consider:
 - Creating an agenda;
 - Keeping a record of discussions;
 - Having food and/or beverages;
 - [Preparing ice-breaker activities](#); and
- Identifying potential items for discussion, such as:
 - Purpose and Expectations;
 - Meeting Dates, Times and Format;
 - Roles and Responsibilities;
 - Meeting Guidelines; and,
 - Activities.
- Advertise (e.g., school announcements, posters, school website) about the group and its purpose.

See GLSEN's [10 Steps to Set Up Your GSA](#) for additional suggestions.