I want to emancipate!

Who wants to join the GSA?

Since me and my friends started a gay straight alliance at my school there is a lot less bullying!

The Inside Out Manifesto

by COC Netherlands

gay straight alliance network netherlands

BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF PEOPLE
THE SITUATION

Fact: 75% of Dutch LGBT youth encountered homophobia
Fact: Only 5% of Dutch students think it’s safe enough to come out of the closet at school
Fact: 50% of Dutch LGB-youth has thought of suicide

EUROPE: Respondents who had heard negative comments or seen negative conduct because a schoolmate was perceived to be LGBT

Period between knowing you’re attracted to the same sex and coming out in the Netherlands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>13.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>15.9</td>
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I'm still being bullied

Online LGBT youth platform
www.jongenout.nl
Between 12 & 18 years old.
Sunday meetings in 16 towns in The Netherlands

Fantastic, but I am still being bullied at school
What can I do?

Finally I found friends who understand me

Inside out: support young LGBT initiatives and help them organize

J&O
Young and Out

We don't have that problem here
Our main objective is providing education (everything else is secondary)
We don't know how to handle this subject

What will the parents say?
What do you mean? We are a very liberal school
We have a anti bullying policy, that should be sufficient

LGBT's don't exist on our school

I found my first girlfriend on J&O
We are in the same situation
I am not the only one

School
WHY DON'T YOU START A GSA?

GSA??

COC: A GSA, Gay Straight Alliance is a group of students (and supporting teachers) who want their school to be safe for everyone. Whether Gay/Straight Lesbian Bisexual Transgender or Questioning

GREAT IDEA!

YEAH!!!

LET'S STOP HOMOPHOBIA!

The Frontliners

GSA INSIDE OUT:
Supporting young people to stand up for their LGBT friends

COC activates and supports Gay Straight Alliances

School board

Teachers

Students

Students
SUPPORT
The GSA provides a safe environment in order to support LGBT students who want to discuss their challenges in life.

ACTION
School signs GSA manifesto
Students sign GSA petition
Day of silence
Purple Friday
Valentine project
GSA party

INFORMATION
The GSA makes sure information about LGBTs is widely available at school. In library, in class, by teachers or storytellers or GSA members.

GSA Debate
Posters and Flyers
GSA week
Facebook page
Coming Out Day

COC NETHERLANDS ACTIVATES, SUPPORTS AND BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER TO FIGHT LGBT BULLYING
GSA Network
Organizes:
- GSA Meet & Greets
- National campaigns like: Purple Friday

Individual members of various GSAs make the GSA Council. The GSA Network is the total sum of individual GSAs plus the organizing power of COC Netherlands.
ON THE 2ND FRIDAY OF DECEMBER
WEAR PURPLE AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

At our school 60% of all students and teachers wore purple

I cannot believe how many people at my school support LGBTs

I’m part of a movement

VISIT THE (DUTCH) WEBSITE

www.gaystraightalliance.nl or Facebook www.facebook.com/GSAnl

Questions? Mail us at gsa@coc.nl
STEP ONE: FORM A GROUP

Find people who want to start a GSA together with you. These people could be your friends, or fellow classmates or students from the student council.

It is possible that all members of a GSA are straight. But ideally a GSA has members of all sexual orientations and gender expressions showing the rest of the school it is possible that everyone can be who he or she is.

It’s absolutely a signal that a GSA is necessary at your school if nobody at your school dares to come out as lesbian, gay, bi or transgender. If this is the case at your school, start a GSA with only straight people.

TIP: Look for a teacher, or someone else who works at your school to support you in starting a GSA. This could be someone who is known to speak out against discrimination for example. Perhaps a teacher you trust or a mentor, or a counselor, or perhaps even the librarian. Such a person perhaps knows even other students who would like to join a GSA and can speak up on your behalf to other teachers and help you with organizing the GSA.
STEP TWO: PLAN A MEETING

Pull out your agenda’s and set up a meeting on a specific time and date for your first GSA meeting. This could be in a classroom after school hours or at someone's home. Important thing is to meet at a place and time that is comfortable and safe for everyone. If someone is not yet out of the closet, it can be daunting for him or her to meet in the canteen at lunchtime.

Some rules:
- Participating in a GSA meeting doesn’t say anything about one’s sexuality
- Everybody is treated with respect
- The meetings are confidential
- Be reliable when committed to the GSA
- Meet at regular intervals
  (for example: every month)
STEP THREE: PLAN YOUR FIRST GSA ACTION

The most exciting step, because: now you have a GSA, what are you going to do? What do you want to achieve with your GSA? Less bullying at school, more attention for lesbian, gay, bi and/or transgender issues, making sure everybody feels safe at your school? How are you going to translate your goals into action?

Are you going to write an article for the school newspaper, or are you starting a petition to get as much support as possible from fellow students for your GSA? Are you designing a poster with kissing men and/or women and hang it all over the hallways or are you going to organize a party where everybody can be whoever and whatever they are? Are you organizing a Purple Friday or another powerful action like Day of Silence?

POINTS:
- What do you want to achieve with your GSA?
- What actions are you going to organize?
- How are you going to carry out your plans?
- When will the action(s) take place?

Write it all down!
STEP FOUR: INFORM THE SCHOOL BOARD

Let the school board (or someone from the school board) know what your plans are. This step can be very important to get total support from your school. A supporting teacher could help you getting the support of the school board. Know that every school board is in the business of providing you and your fellow students a good education in a safe environment. This means they are interested in every form in which they can diminish bullying at their school. A student initiative to make your school safe for everyone is therefore hard to deny.

TIP

Arrange a meeting with your GSA and the school board. Let the members of the school board know what really goes on at your school. It’s a plus when your GSA has members who are openly lesbian, gay, bi or transgender. School boards rarely know how difficult it is at their school to come out for your sexual orientation. You can make them aware of this. They probably want to support you even more for your open approach.

Is your school board not interested in your plans or banning your GSA, than it’s time to make contact with your local student and LGBT organizations for advice. In most European countries schools are not allowed to ban student groups. However, when you find yourself in the position of not being able to start a GSA at your school, start one with fellow students outside school.
STEP FIVE: CARRY OUT YOUR PLANS

Did you plan your actions, then start making them a reality. Make sure you have thought of everything. Take a good look at what is needed and who is responsible for what. When everybody takes his or her task seriously, you have a greater chance of success.

Make sure your first action has a high visibility within the school and makes your GSA look good.

TIP:

Visibility is very important for your GSA. There are many ways of making your GSA been seen in school, for example by posters or stickers. Another idea is to write a letter to all teachers and students about the GSA. Let everybody know who you are and why you are there. You will notice that your GSA will be the talk of the school in no time. And that’s exactly what you want: that everybody is talking about being who they are, whether they are gay, straight, bi, transgender or questioning.