

# How to Support Your Students When They Come Out to You

GLYS Western New York, Inc.  
*Growing LGBTQ+ Youth Support*

According to the Trevor Project: LGBTQ+ youth who report having at least **one** accepting adult were **40% less likely** to report a suicide attempt within the last year (2019).

**BE THAT ONE ADULT. HELP SAVE A LIFE.**

## DO's

Offer support but do not assume they need help. Your student may be completely comfortable in their identity and may not need help "dealing" with it. It may just be that the student wanted to share this information with you so you might know them better.

Always model good behavior by; using inclusive language, setting an accepting environment, not making assumptions about people's identities, addressing others' biased language, and addressing stereotypes and myths about LGBTQ people also positions you as a positive role model.

Assure and respect confidentiality by letting the student know that the conversation is confidential and that you won't share the information with anyone else, unless they ask for your help

Ask questions and demonstrate understanding, acceptance and compassion. You are allowed to ask questions to better understand, but it is not LGBTQ+ people's job to justify and explain their identities to you.

## DONT's

Do not disclose their identity without their permission: this is called outing.

Refuse to use a student's chosen name or pronouns: this is illegal in New York State under DASA

Say things like:

- "I knew it!"  
This makes the disclosure about you and not about the student
- "It is just a phase" or "Are you sure?"  
This suggests that the student doesn't know who they are

Let your own thoughts and beliefs affect the way you treat and respect your students.

### Additional Things to Keep in Mind if Your Student Comes Out as Trans:

It is important to use the pronouns and name that the person requests, this shows your respect for them and their identities, or use gender neutral language. The transgender experience is unique to each person but also from their cisgender queer peers.

### Be Prepared to Give Referrals

GLYS is available to help you navigate this situation or any situation regarding LGBTQ+ youth in your school. Give us a call at 716.855.0221 or visit our site at [www.glyswny.org](http://www.glyswny.org)