



10 ideas for Middle School GSAs!

There's a ton of stuff you can do to have a lot of fun with a Gay-Straight Alliance in Middle School. Just make sure it's always fun and interactive, and always, ALWAYS have food!

1. **Movie screening** – show an appropriately rated movie that sparks thought and discussion about diversity, name-calling, bullying, or LGBT issues, and then have a debrief to help students reflect on the lessons in the movie. For suggestions, go to www.glsen.org, and click on "Booklink" at the bottom.
2. **Community service project** – a GSA doesn't just have to do things pertaining directly to their mission in order to make change. They can get out into the community and help others while building leadership and community. Also, it's great for other community members to see the positive contributions that LGBT and allied youth are making to the world around them.
3. **GLSEN Days of Action** – GLSEN's Student Organizing Department sponsors four days of action throughout the school year, that are meant to raise awareness, celebrate, encourage collaboration and involve LGBT and allied people of all walks. These are Ally Week, Transgender Day of Remembrance, Martin Luther King, Jr. Organizing Weekend, and the Day of Silence. Ally Week is an especially great way to begin the school year and reach out to new faces. For more information and to register for these events, go to www.dayofsilence.org.
4. **GLSEN's No Name-Calling Week** – No Name-Calling Week is a week of activities and lessons geared towards elementary- and middle-school students. The GSA can bring this to the school and help organize it, as well as participate in GLSEN's national Creative Expressions Contest. For more information, go to www.nonamecallingweek.org.
5. **Reading group** – students can read age-appropriate books, such as *Rainbow High*, and meet to discuss what they've read. For suggestions, go to www.glsen.org and click on "Booklink" at the bottom. If your school doesn't provide LGBT-inclusive books, your students might want to make a campaign to get LGBT-inclusive books in the library.
6. **Bowling** – sometimes students just need to relax and have fun in a safe, supportive atmosphere. Get some parents to chaperone, and have a good time! Just find out from the school what's allowed. Bowling isn't the only social outing that works, obviously.
7. **Networking with other clubs** – have your students come up with ideas for activities or projects or learning experiences they might be able to have with other clubs in the school. This is good for awareness, expanding a feeling of safety, and outreach to new members, as well as fun!
8. **Poster campaign** – your students can raise awareness about harmful language and homophobia by making fun and engaging posters, and encouraging others to pay attention to the issue.
9. **Coffee house/poetry night** – encourage those creative spirits to emerge, and provide a place for students to work on their writing or other artistic expressions. Give time for this during meetings, and then provide a chance for them to show off their talents after school in the library with fun snacks.
10. **Campaign for policy change** – who says young people don't have a voice? Encourage your students to research the process of changing school anti-bullying policies to include protections from bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.