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# #spiritday

On October 16, 2014, millions of Americans and citizens around the world will wear purple on Spirit Day in a stand against bullying and in support of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth. GLAAD is once again leading outreach to engage the participation of individuals, celebrities, corporations, small businesses, media outlets, schools, local communities and even national landmarks. By going purple on Spirit Day, participants can easily demonstrate their support for the LGBT community simply by wearing purple.

**This kit will help you engage the participation of your friends, colleagues, local media and public officials. By spreading the word about Spirit Day, you can help turn your local community purple in a stand against bullying and in a show of support for LGBT youth.**

**I'm going purple for #spiritday in a stand against bullying and to show my support for LGBT youth.**

## How Can I Participate?

Pledge to go purple: Take the Spirit Day pledge right now at [glaad.org/spiritday](http://glaad.org/spiritday) and then wear purple on October 16 in a stand against bullying. Encourage members of your community to do the same.

1. Go purple online: Turn your Facebook and Twitter profile pictures purple. Use GLAAD's app here: [glaad.org/spiritday](http://glaad.org/spiritday)
2. Share your support: Post a photo of yourself in your Spirit Day purple to Facebook or Twitter using hashtag #SpiritDay. Suggested tweet: Join me in wearing purple for #SpiritDay on 10/16 to support LGBT youth. Go purple here: [glaad.org/spiritday](http://glaad.org/spiritday)
3. Donate to the Spirit Day fund: By chipping in just \$5 or whatever amount is right for you, you'll be helping to support GLAAD's year-round efforts to combat bullying, protect LGBT youth, and bring Spirit Day to more people than ever. Find out how here: [glaad.org/spiritday/donate](http://glaad.org/spiritday/donate)

## How Can I Encourage Community Participation?

1. Wear purple at your job, in school, at church, or just around town. Tell people why you are wearing purple, share the history and message of Spirit Day, and ask those around you to participate by wearing purple in a stand against bullying.
2. Contact local businesses and organizations, and ask them to support Spirit Day and LGBT youth by going purple at their place of operation and on social media. Encourage local media outlets to cover an event for Spirit Day or pitch a story to them that raises awareness of bullying and issues faced by LGBT youth.
3. Hold an event for Spirit Day at your local community center, your college campus, or another public area. Encourage attendees to wear purple and center the event on raising awareness about a local issue pertaining to LGBT youth or bullying.

## How Did Spirit Day Begin?

Spirit Day was started in 2010 by a high school student as a way to show support for LGBT youth and take a stand against bullying. With GLAAD's help, millions of teachers, workplaces, media personalities and students wore purple, a color that symbolizes spirit on the rainbow flag.



go purple on October 16, 2014  
[glaad.org/spiritday](http://glaad.org/spiritday)





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## Engage your school

**Ask your school or university to take part in Spirit Day by encouraging students to wear purple on October 16 in a stand against bullying. You can copy and paste the text below, and send the letter to your school's principal, chancellor, dean or student government body.**

[DATE]

Dear [SCHOOL OR UNIVERSITY CONTACT]:

On October 16, 2014, millions of Americans will wear purple on Spirit Day in a stand against bullying and to show their support for lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth.

Will you join us by observing Spirit Day on October 16 and help show LGBT students the support they so critically need?

Conceptualized in 2010 by a high school student wanting to memorialize those who lost their lives to bullying, Spirit Day has since garnered widespread support from schools, local communities, celebrities, TV news and entertainment programs, corporations, organizations, and even national landmarks.

Among those who participated in 2013 were hosts of Good Morning America, The Today Show, The View, and The Talk; celebrities like Oprah, Demi Lovato, Laverne Cox, Ricky Martin, and Melissa Etheridge; media outlets like MTV, NBCUniversal, HBO, and E!; corporations including Facebook, PepsiCo, and PwC; and national landmarks like Times Square, the Las Vegas Strip, and even the White House.

This year, Spirit Day is poised to be bigger and better than ever, with hundreds more notables signing on, including student clubs, universities and entire school districts.

Today, 8 out of 10 LGBT students experiences harassment while at school. By inviting students, administrators, and teachers to participate in Spirit Day, we can send a strong message of support to [SCHOOL OR UNIVERSITY NAME]'s LGBT and allied students, while taking a firm stand against bullying.

Participation is simple, but its impact is tremendous.

For more information, or to see who else is participating, visit [glaad.org/spiritday](http://glaad.org/spiritday)

With gratitude for your service,

[YOUR NAME]

Signature



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## Engage Public Officials

**Ask your school or university to take part in Spirit Day by encouraging students to wear purple on October 16 in a stand against bullying. You can copy and paste the text below, and send the letter to your school’s principal, chancellor, dean or student government body.**

[DATE]

Dear [NAME OF PUBLIC OFFICIAL]:

On October 16, 2014, millions of Americans will wear purple on Spirit Day in a stand against bullying and to show their support for lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth.

Conceptualized in 2010 by a high school student wanting to memorialize those who lost their lives to bullying, Spirit Day has since garnered widespread support from celebrities, TV news and entertainment programs, corporations, organizations, schools, local communities, and even national landmarks like the White House.

Among those who participated in 2013 were hosts of Good Morning America, The Today Show, The View, and The Talk; celebrities like Oprah, Demi Lovato, Laverne Cox, Ricky Martin, and Melissa Etheridge; media outlets like MTV, NBCUniversal, HBO, and E!; corporations including Facebook, PepsiCo, and PwC; and national landmarks like Times Square, the Las Vegas Strip, and even the White House.

This year, Spirit Day is poised to be bigger and better than ever, with hundreds more notables signing on.

Will you join us to send an affirming message to America’s youth and help put a stop to the bullying?

Whether it’s sharing information about Spirit Day on your official blog, turning your Facebook or Twitter profile photos purple, or simply encouraging your colleagues and constituents to wear purple on 10/16, participating is easy – but its impact is tremendous.

By going purple on Spirit Day, you will stand in solidarity with millions of Americans, while letting countless young people know it’s okay to be who you are.

For more information, or to see who else is participating, visit [glaad.org/spiritday](http://glaad.org/spiritday)

With gratitude for your service,

[YOUR NAME]

Signature



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## Sample Pitch

Use the template below to contact your local print and broadcast news outlets. Be sure to include information about a local angle, such as a list of those people in your community that will be participating in Spirit Day.

**Subject: Join millions and go purple for anti-bullying on 10/16**

Dear [NAME]

On October 16, millions of Americans will once again wear purple on Spirit Day in a stand against bullying and to show their support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth. Spirit Day is the largest, most visible anti-bullying campaign for LGBT youth in the country.

Would [OUTLET NAME] like to participate by going purple and sharing information about Spirit Day on 10/16/14?

Among those who participated in 2013 were hosts of Good Morning America, The Today Show, The View, and The Talk; celebrities like Oprah, Demi Lovato, Laverne Cox, Ricky Martin, and Melissa Etheridge; media outlets like MTV, NBCUniversal, HBO, and E!; corporations including Facebook, PepsiCo, and PwC; and national landmarks like Times Square, the Las Vegas Strip, and even the White House.

Possible ways you can participate:

- Publish or broadcast a story about Spirit Day, with information about local participants including [LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN YOUR AREA]
- Ask anchors to wear purple on air and share with viewers why your outlet supports Spirit Day.
- Turn your website's logo purple and/or turn your Facebook and Twitter profile pictures purple (Tool here: [glaad.org/spiritday](http://glaad.org/spiritday))
- Share information about Spirit Day with your audience through social media channels
- This year, Spirit Day is poised to be bigger and better than ever, with dozens more notables participating. Additionally, hundreds of celebrities are expected to take part again this year.

For more ways to participate, or for more information, please visit [glaad.org/spiritday](http://glaad.org/spiritday)

Together, we can help put an end to bullying and let every young person know it's okay to be who you are.

[YOUR NAME]



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## Engage Local TV and Radio

**You can help spread the message of Spirit Day by reaching out to your local TV news stations and letting reporters know why you and millions of Americans are going purple on October 16. Here are some ways you can craft a story, pitch it to a broadcast outlet, and ensure that your Spirit Day activities get the spotlight they deserve.**

- Local news broadcasts often air human interest-driven pieces, so sharing a unique story about your personal stance against bullying and the work being done in your community to create an inclusive and affirming environment for all people will grab a journalist's attention.
- Frame your story in a way that appeals to media outlets. This will help them see why your story is newsworthy. You can focus on an event you're holding for Spirit Day and why you are holding it, or tie the day's message of acceptance to an issue in your community that speaks to local interests.
- A 'pitch' – the way you package your story for the media – should be informative, interesting, and brief. Journalists and reporters will be working on a deadline, so make yourself available by providing contact information and having your message prepared. (See a sample pitch on p.4)
- Once you have a pitch together, choose the broadcast outlet(s) you want to contact. Do your research by watching a few episodes of a given program to see if and how they handle issues like bullying or the LGBT community, or identify the outlets you have previously seen cover these topics. Find out if the station has covered Spirit Day before. Outlets with a record of fair, accurate and inclusive reporting are the best place to start pitching your story.
- Next, email or call the outlet(s) you chose. Contact producers, segment producers, news producers and assignment editors first, and know that you may need to try many departments before reaching the right person. If you know of a reporter that has covered Spirit Day previously, contact them and gauge whether they are willing to follow up on their previous work. Ideally, your story will air on or close to Spirit Day, so contact programs as far in advance of their production time as possible to better your chances of air time. Newsroom contact information is usually located on the outlet's website.
- If you or people who are part of your story will be interviewed, prepare yourself and everyone else with straight-forward and engaging talking points about the history of Spirit Day, what it involves, why you are participating, and what others can do to join the effort to end bullying. Remember that the media is a microphone for your message to reach others, so speak to the audience and not the interviewer. For example: "I am wearing purple for Spirit Day in a stand against bullying and to show my support for all young people."
- Televised stories have a visual component, and having your purple as visible as possible will draw viewers' attention. Wear purple, have purple signs, etc.
- Once your story has aired, follow up with the reporter and producers, and thank them for helping you share the message of Spirit Day. Your professionalism and gratitude can open doors for future coverage of LGBT stories.



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## Engage Local Newspapers

**On October 16, Americans may find their favorite print news outlets going purple with articles and stories about Spirit Day and the movement to counter bullying of LGBT youth. You can help make this happen by reaching out to print media, pitching a well-framed story, and urging your community to go purple and take part in Spirit Day. Below are the tools you'll need to effectively communicate your ideas to journalists and ensure that your message reaches your community.**

- Print media tend to give stories a longer, more in-depth platform, so consider how you can show as many dimensions of Spirit Day as possible in your story. This might mean mentioning why Spirit Day is important to different facets of your community, or by detailing the different ways that individuals and institutions can get involved.
- If you are submitting an op-ed, or guest opinion piece, follow all guidelines provided by the news outlet (usually provided on the outlet's website). Generally, op-eds are 500-800 words, provide an intriguing opinion on a current topic or inform about a neglected topic, and contain a personalized message. Include relevant facts, but avoid an impersonal or alarmist tone. This is a great opportunity to discuss issues like bullying and the needs of LGBT youth, which demand attention.
- When pitching your story to a reporter or editor, be brief, informative, and engaging. Confidently state why Spirit Day matters and convey why your particular piece or story is newsworthy. If pitching an event you want covered by print news, focus your attention on the 'who, what, when, where and why,' with little extraneous information. (See a sample pitch on p.4)
- Look at past coverage of Spirit Day, LGBT issues, or youth and bullying by the outlet(s) you plan to pitch. Was their coverage fair, accurate and inclusive? The outlet(s) with such coverage are the best place to start. Contact reporters who have covered issues relevant to your story if possible, or reach out to assignment editors and section editors. Small community papers may have a busier staff – be patient, persistent, and offer to help anyway you can.
- Respect deadlines by contacting outlets at appropriate times. For daily newspapers, reach out in the morning before reporters are on deadline for the following day's stories. Earlier in the day and earlier in the week are usually best. Weekly newspapers have more predictable news cycles, so do your research and contact your chosen outlet(s) with enough advance to secure space for your story.
- If you are being interviewed for a print outlet, have your message prepared with concise and punchy talking points that explain what Spirit Day is, why and how you are participating, and how others can get involved. Tie the day to a relevant local issue around LGBT youth or bullying, if possible. Though it is print news, you should condense your message into sound bites that readers will digest easily and remember.
- After your piece runs, follow up with the reporter(s) and editor(s) you worked with and thank them for helping to spread the message of Spirit Day. Your professionalism and gratitude can open doors for future coverage of LGBT stories.





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## Fact Sheet

**When talking with the media or writing letters to administrators, it is often useful to cite statistics. Statistics about bullying in grades middle and high school can be found in the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) biennial National School Climate Survey documenting the experiences of LGBT youth. On college campuses, bullying takes the form of harassment and discrimination against LGBT people. In 2010, Campus Pride released the most comprehensive national research to date on the experiences of LGBT students, faculty, and staff in higher education in 2010. We have included excerpts from both reports below.**

### In grades K-12...

- 82% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed, 38% reported being physically harassed and 18% reported being physically assaulted at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation.
- 85% of LGBT students heard “gay” used in a negative way (e.g., “that’s so gay”) and 71% heard homophobic remarks (e.g., “dyke” or “faggot”) frequently or often at school.
- 6 in 10 LGBT students (64%) reported feeling unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation; and 4 in 10 (44%) felt unsafe because of their gender expression.
- Increased levels of victimization were related to increased levels of depression and decreased levels of self-esteem.
- Having a GSA and/or an LGBT-inclusive curriculum was related to more positive experiences for LGBT students.

(Source: “The National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth in Our Nation’s Schools.” Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN), 2012, [http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN\\_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/002/2105-1.pdf](http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/002/2105-1.pdf).)

### In higher education...

- One quarter (23%) of LGBTQ staff, faculty, and students at colleges and universities reported experiencing harassment. An even greater percentage of transgender students, faculty, & staff reported experiencing harassment (39%). The form of the harassment experienced by transgender people was more overt and blatant.
- One-third of LGBTQ (33%) and transgender (38%) college students, faculty, and staff have seriously considered leaving their institution due to the challenging climate.
- More than half of all faculty, college students, & staff hide their sexual identity (43%) or gender identity (63%) to avoid intimidation.
- 43% of all transgender students, faculty, & staff and 13% of LGBTQ respondents feared for their physical safety. This finding was more salient for LGBTQ students and for LGBTQ and/or Transgender People of Color.
- The intersection of multiple cultural and social identities increases the risk for negative perceptions of campus climate.

(Source: Susan Rankin, Genevieve Weber, Warren Blumenfeld, Somjen Frazer, “2010 State of Higher Education for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People,” Campus Pride, 2010, <http://www.campuspride.org/Campus%20Pride%202010%20LGBT%20Report%20Summary.pdf>.)