



Ten Things You Can Do To Challenge Homophobia

1. Do not assume heterosexuality in general discussions about people.

Be inclusive in the language that you use, thereby avoiding marginalising lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

2. Make sure that homophobic bullying is identified in your organisation's bullying policy.

All equal opportunities policies should include a positive statement about sexual orientation, as they would about race, belief, disability, gender etc.

3. Create a safe environment.

Use posters of Helpline numbers covering a range of issues to indicate that there is help available should they need it. Have nominated staff to whom colleagues can turn included in this publicity.

4. Provide information.

Ensure appropriate books and information can be found in resources banks. Remove offensive books and materials.

5. Provide appropriate health information.

People identifying as gay or lesbian or unsure of their sexual orientation have an equal right to appropriate sexual health education as part of an organisation's Duty of Care.

6. Be a role model.

Actions speak louder than words. By adopting a consistently respectful behaviour to others' difference, ourselves, we can foster this in young people.

7. Be supportive.

If a colleague chooses you to discuss any concerns about their sexuality it's because they respect you. Respect them for doing so and don't automatically refer them onto someone else.

8. Use your organisation's 'curriculum'.

Programmes of learning or education provide myriad opportunities to open up sensible, appropriate discussion around sexuality – take advantage of such "teachable moments". Don't regard issues of sexuality as the preserve of 'private life'.

9. Invite outside speakers to talk to your colleagues about difference, respect, understanding, prejudice and discrimination.

Invite the local council's equality unit to assist by explaining how they address equality issues generally.

10. Request staff training as a matter of course.

Staff cannot be expected to understand how damaging homophobia is within their organisation's culture, and how important it is to support those affected by it, without professional guidance.



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