



10.15.2020

# spirit day

presenting  
partners



# 2020 RESOURCE KIT

## OFFICIAL PARTNERS



KIRKLAND & ELLIS



## COMMUNITY PARTNERS





## What is Spirit Day?

On October 15, 2020, millions of Americans and people around the world will “go purple” on Spirit Day in a stand against bullying and in support of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth. In an effort to close the gap between growing legal protections and lived LGBTQ acceptance, GLAAD is once again leading the charge to inspire and engage the participation of individuals, celebrities, corporations, small businesses, media outlets, schools, local communities and even national landmarks.

In 2020, youth are facing unprecedented challenges in their daily lives. LGBTQ youth today experience disproportionate levels of bullying, growing anxiety and safety concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic, and continued threats of violence and discrimination based on their identities. This year’s Spirit Day will be a critical moment of reflection as we shine a light on the resilience and power of LGBTQ youth. On Spirit Day, participants can easily demonstrate their support for LGBTQ kids, teens, and young adults simply by going purple: wearing it, talking about bullying, and taking action online and in local communities.

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

## How can I participate?

1. Pledge to go purple: Take the Spirit Day pledge right now at [glaad.org/spiritday](https://glaad.org/spiritday) and then wear purple on October 15 in a stand against bullying. Encourage members of your community to do the same.
2. Go purple online: Turn your Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pictures purple, and make your video call background purple. Find out how at [glaad.org/spiritday](https://glaad.org/spiritday) [glaad.org/spiritday](https://glaad.org/spiritday)  
Share your support: Tweet, post media, share GLAAD social media posts, send Snapchats, and take selfies in your Spirit Day purple using #SpiritDay.  
Suggested tweet: *Join me in wearing purple for #SpiritDay on 10/15 to support LGBTQ youth. Go purple here: [glaad.org/spiritday](https://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 LGBTQ youth, and bring Spirit Day to more people than ever. Find out how at [glaad.org/spiritday/donate](https://glaad.org/spiritday/donate)

## How can I encourage community participation?

1. Wear purple at your job, in school, at church, around town, and on your social media pages. 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 LGBTQ 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 LGBTQ youth.
3. Hold a virtual event with people in your community or from your college or school
4. Encourage attendees to wear purple and center the event on raising awareness about a local issue pertaining to LGBTQ

## How did Spirit Day begin?

High school student Brittany McMillan founded Spirit Day in 2010 in response to the alarming number of young LGBTQ lives lost to suicide—notably, the loss of Tyler Clementi. She wanted to create a day of awareness, acceptance, and love to prevent such tragedies. With GLAAD’s help, millions of teachers, workplaces, media personalities, and students wore purple, which symbolizes spirit on the rainbow flag, to stand in solidarity with LGBTQ youth.

Today, Spirit Day is an international movement of solidarity. Every year since 2010, on the third Thursday of October, millions go purple to stand up against bullying and to accelerate acceptance for LGBTQ kids, teens, and young adults. When Laverne Cox lit the Empire State Building purple during 2014’s Spirit Day, she got to the heart of the vision: “I want LGBTQ youth all over this country to know that they are beautiful, to know that they are divinely made, and that their lives matter.”

It all starts with you.

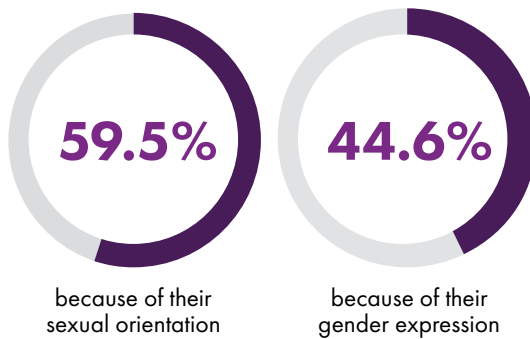


## The facts

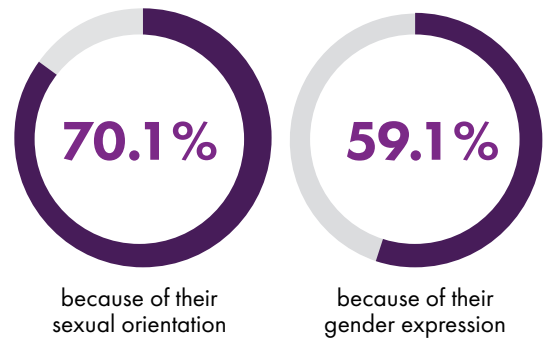
According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (StopBullying.gov), bullying is “unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.” Bullying can include verbal harassment, physical harm, social exclusion, and cyber threats. Bullying behaviors are repeatable, targeted, and come with long-lasting consequences.

Since 1999, the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN) has assessed the safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students in grades six to twelve in its National School Climate Survey. The 2017 tenth biennial report of the National School Climate Survey reached 23,001 students from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 5 U.S. territories. The responses below are from those students, all of whom identified as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community:

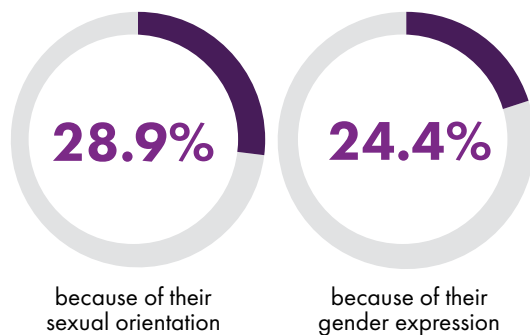
### LGBTQ students who feel unsafe at school



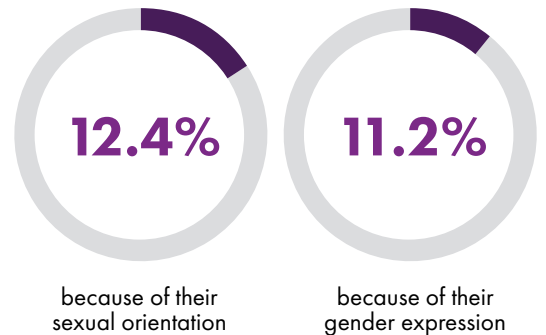
### LGBTQ students who were verbally harassed



### LGBTQ students who were physically harassed

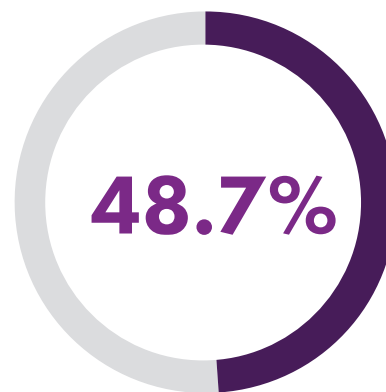
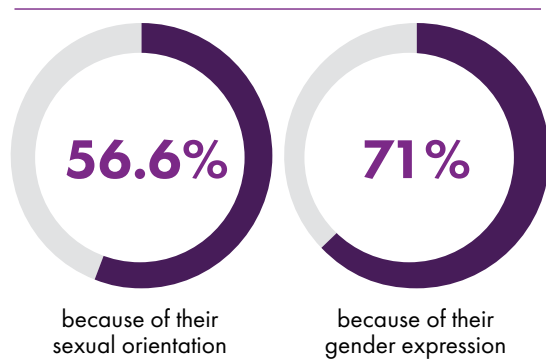


### LGBTQ students who were physically assaulted

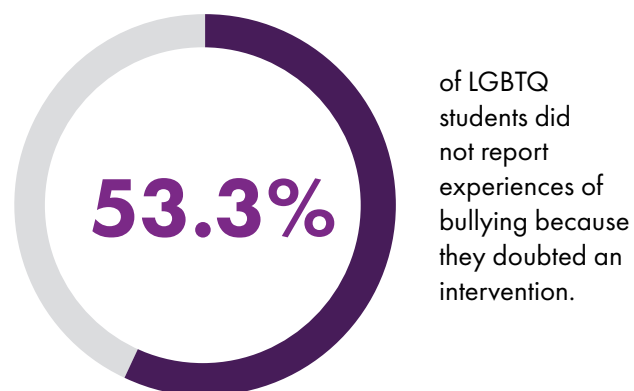


Source: 2017 National School Climate Survey, GLSEN

## LGBTQ students who heard homophobic remarks from teachers and/or school staff



of LGBTQ students have experienced cyberbullying.



of LGBTQ students did not report experiences of bullying because they doubted an intervention.



of LGBTQ students who reported bullying said school staff did nothing in response, or told the student to ignore it.

Source: 2017 National School Climate Survey, GLSEN



## Engage your school

1. Ask your school or university to take part in Spirit Day by encouraging students to wear purple on October 15 in a stand against bullying.
2. If your school or school district has a Twitter account, tweet at them invite your friends to tweet at them, directing them to [glaad.org/spiritday](https://www.glaad.org/spiritday).
3. Copy and paste the text below, and send the letter to your school's principal, chancellor, dean or student government body.
4. If your school is conducting classes online, ask that teachers and staff members seen on Zoom classes wear purple or start the class with a Spirit Day message to show their solidarity digitally.

[DATE]

Dear [SCHOOL OR UNIVERSITY CONTACT]:

On October 15, 2020, millions of Americans will wear purple on Spirit Day in a stand against bullying and to show their support for lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth.

Will you join us by observing Spirit Day on October 15 and help show LGBTQ 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 become an international movement of solidarity for LGBTQ kids, teens, and young adults.

Today, 7 out of 10 LGBTQ students experience harassment while at school. As youth stay relatively isolated in their homes and increase their use of the internet due to COVID-19 precautions, bullying and its impact have taken on new forms and intensities. 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 LGBTQ and allied students, while taking a firm stand against bullying. As a student of this institution, I care about this issue, and I would like to see my school become a safer place for all.

There are a number of ways to participate:

- Take the Spirit Day commitment to stand against bullying and for LGBTQ youth by registering our school at [glaad.org/spiritday](https://www.glaad.org/spiritday)
- Educate faculty and staff about Spirit Day and encourage them to wear purple on October 15, 2020
- Inform the community about Spirit Day in school newsletters, etc.
- Post about Spirit Day on October 15, 2020 from the school's social media accounts
- Send Spirit Day messages on any daily announcements leading up to and including October 15, 2020
- In previous years, schools and universities across the country and students around the world joined celebrities like Nick Jonas, Laverne Cox, and Jimmy Kimmel; hosts of Good Morning America and CNBC; media outlets like CBS, Viacom, and BET; corporations including Facebook, PepsiCo, and Delta Air Lines; and national landmarks like Times Square, the Empire State Building, and the New York Stock Exchange.

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. Participation is simple, but impactful. Of the disproportionate number of LGBTQ students bullied in the past year, less than half of those targeted sought help from their schools. Spirit Day shows LGBTQ kids, teens, and young adults, that there are people they can go to for help and acceptance and that their place of learning is safe and welcoming.

For more information, including a list of others participating, visit [glaad.org/spiritday](https://www.glaad.org/spiritday). You can find resources for parents and educators available at [glaad.org/spiritday](https://www.glaad.org/spiritday).

With gratitude for your service,

[Signature]

[YOUR NAME]



## Engage public officials

1. Ask your local public officials to take part in Spirit Day by wearing purple, turning their social channels purple and leveraging their public platform to call attention to LGBTQ youth and bullying.
2. Copy and paste the text below, and send the letter to your local elected and appointed officials. To find your members of the United States Senate and House, visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov).

[DATE]

Dear [NAME OF PUBLIC OFFICIAL]:

On October 15, 2020, millions of Americans will wear purple on Spirit Day in a stand against bullying and to show their support for lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) 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 previous years were public officials across party lines nationwide; celebrities like Mariah Carey, Nick Jonas, Laverne Cox, Ricky Martin, and Jimmy Kimmel; hosts of Good Morning America, CNBC, and The View; media outlets like MTV, CBS, Viacom, and BET; corporations including Facebook, PepsiCo, Twitter, and Delta Air Lines; and national landmarks like Times Square, the Empire State Building, and the New York Stock Exchange.

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 and anti-LGBTQ bullying on your official blog, Instagram, or any other social media platforms you use; turning your Facebook or Twitter profile photos purple; or simply encouraging your colleagues and constituents to wear purple on 10/15, participating is easy – but its impact is tremendous.

Today, 7 out of 10 LGBTQ students experience harassment while at school. Of the disproportionate number of LGBTQ students bullied in the past year, less than half of those targeted sought help from their schools, and even when cases were reported, school officials rarely acted. Spirit Day shows LGBTQ kids, teens, and young adults, that there are people they can go to for help and affirmation.

By going purple on Spirit Day, you will show your solidarity with millions of Americans accelerating acceptance, while letting countless young people know you and your office/administration have got their back, and stand with them against bullying. As your constituent, I care about this issue, and I would like to see schools become a safer place for all.

For more information, including who else is participating, visit [glad.org/spiritday](http://glad.org/spiritday)

With gratitude for your service,

Signature

[YOUR NAME]



## 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 15. 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.10)
- 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 LGBTQ 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 LGBTQ stories.
- And do not forget to send GLAAD the link to the piece, so we can share it with the world.





## Engage local newspapers

On October 15, Americans may find their favorite print and online news outlets going purple with articles and stories about Spirit Day and the movement to counter bullying of LGBTQ youth. You can help make this happen by reaching out to print and online 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 and online news outlets 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 LGBTQ 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.10)
- Look at past coverage of Spirit Day, LGBTQ 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 LGBTQ 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 LGBTQ stories.
- As always, send GLAAD the link to the published story, so we can share it!



## 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 10/15**

Dear [NAME]

On October 15, 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, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth. Spirit Day is the largest, most visible anti-bullying campaign for LGBTQ youth in the country, and GLAAD, the nation's leading LGBTQ media advocacy organization, is empowering youth to get others involved in this movement. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, LGBTQ youth are particularly vulnerable. This year, we are rallying everyone to show them support and love.

Would [OUTLET NAME] like to participate by going purple and sharing information about Spirit Day and anti-LGBTQ bullying on 10/15/20?

Among those who participated in 2019 were celebrities like Mariah Carey, Nick Jonas, Laverne Cox, Ricky Martin, and Jimmy Kimmel; hosts of Good Morning America, CNBC, and The View; media outlets like MTV, CBS, Viacom, and BET; corporations including Facebook, PepsiCo, Twitter, and Delta Air Lines; and national landmarks like Times Square, the Empire State Building, and the New York Stock Exchange.

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]
- Highlight the ways the pandemic has affected LGBTQ youth in your area with a feature in your publication, news broadcast or radio station
- 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](https://www.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.

Today, 7 out of 10 LGBTQ students experience harassment while at school. Of the disproportionate number of LGBTQ students bullied in the past year, less than half of those targeted sought help from their schools, and even when cases were reported, school officials rarely acted. Spirit Day shows LGBTQ kids, teens, and young adults that there are people they can go to for help and acceptance.

For more ways to participate, including a list of participants, please visit [glaad.org/spiritday](https://www.glaad.org/spiritday).

[YOUR NAME]



### SUGGESTED POST

Take a stand against bullying and support #LGBTQ youth by going purple for #SpiritDay on Oct. 15: [glad.org/spiritday](http://glad.org/spiritday)





GLAAD rewrites the script for LGBTQ acceptance.  
As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change.  
GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.

[glaad.org](http://glaad.org)  
[facebook.com/glaad](https://facebook.com/glaad)  
[@glaad](https://twitter.com/glaad)