

HOW TO BE THE ADULT WHO MAKES A DIFFERENCE

ONE AFFIRMING ADULT LOWERS SUICIDE RISK BY 40%



Research shows that LGBTQ+ youth who have just one affirming adult in their life — a parent, teacher, coach, therapist, or neighbor — are 40% less likely to attempt suicide.

(Source: The Trevor Project, 2022)

That means you don't need to have all the answers. You just need to show up with kindness, respect, and openness. For many kids, you might be that one safe person.



WHAT DOES "AFFIRMING" MEAN IN REAL LIFE



Being affirming is more than just tolerance. It's about making sure LGBTQ+ kids feel seen, respected, and accepted exactly as they are.

Being affirming looks like:

- Using the name and pronouns someone asks for
- Listening without judgment or correction
- Respecting their identity, even if it's new to you
- Letting them lead in sharing their story
- Creating spaces where they don't have to hide or explain themselves



SHE/HER

SHE/HER



HE/HIM

THEY/THEM

HE/HIM



●●●●●●●● MICRO-AFFIRMATIONS: SMALL THINGS THAT ADD UP ●●●●●●●●



MICRO-AFFIRMATION

- "I'm really glad you trusted me with that."
- "Your identity is valid."
- Updating classroom or office signage to say "All are welcome"
- Asking "What name and pronouns feel best for you?"
- Speaking up when others make harmful jokes or comments



WHY IT MATTERS

- Builds safety and connection.
- Counters shame and doubt.
- Shows proactive inclusion.
- Signals respect.
- Models allyship.

♥♥♥♥♥ THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE AND PRESENCE ♥♥♥♥♥



Words can wound, but words can also heal.



Silence can feel like rejection, but showing up can feel like love.

Kids notice:

- Who respects their identity
- Who stays quiet during harmful comments
- Who stands up for them
- Who they can trust to talk to



Every small interaction sends a message.





HOW TO SHOW UP — EVEN IF YOU'RE STILL LEARNING

You don't have to be perfect. You just have to be real.



Be honest: "I'm still learning, but I care about you and want to get this right."



Apologize when you mess up: "Thanks for correcting me. I'll do better."



Ask respectful questions if the person is open to it — but center their comfort, not your curiosity.



Remember: It's not about knowing everything. It's about being kind, curious, and supportive.

KEEP LEARNING, KEEP GROWING

Explore these resources to build your skills and understanding:



The Family Acceptance Project: familyproject.sfsu.edu

GLSEN (Safe Schools Resources): glsen.org

Gender Spectrum: genderspectrum.org

Trans Lifeline: translifeline.org

WPATH (Provider Education): wpath.org

The Trevor Project: thetrevorproject.org

