Actions to Challenge Heterosexism and Homophobia on Campus

Educate Yourself
- Read gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender literature and history
- Read newspapers or journals that feature LGBT news/issues
- Go through a whole day imagining yourself to be a LGBT person
- Attend LGBT films, worships, seminars, cultural events, or hear speakers
- Attend a meeting of a group such as PFLAG (Parents, Family, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
- Listen to and learn from LGBT people

Model Non-heterosexist or Non-homophobic Behavior and Attitudes
- Take pride in your same-sex relationship
- Use inclusive language like partner or date rather than boyfriend/girlfriend or husband/wife
- Make friends with and get close to LGBT people
- Don’t assume that being gay, lesbian, or bisexual, and transgender people don’t have, like, or want children
- Keep information you have about others’ sexual orientations/identity confidential
- Use the same standards for same sex affection in public that you use for opposite sex affection

Create an Inclusive Culture and a Welcoming Environment
- Assume that some people in your residence hall, classes, groups, and/or campus community are LGBT
- Assume that closeted LGBT people in your residence hall, classes, groups, and/or campus community are wondering how safe the environment is for them; provide safety by making it clear you accept and support all people
- Put up bulletin board displays that include same sex couples or references to LGBT lives and people
- Post fliers announcing events of interest of LGBT people; remember there is a heterosexual assumption, so actively advertise that LGBT people are welcome (especially at parties and dances)
- Find out about and share resources and information on gay-affirmative service providers, events, bookstores, bars, etc.
- Say the words “gay”, “lesbian”, “bisexual”, and “transgender” out loud; be aware that there may be LGBT people around you, even if none are “out of the closet”

Educate Others
- Sponsor a workshop on homophobia
- Sponsor a LGBT speakers bureau program
Sponsor films like Pink Triangle, Times of Harvey Milk, Before Stonewall, Personal Best, Parting Glances, Desert of hearths, etc.
Set up bulletin board displays on LGBT issues/culture/people
Have informal discussions where you live, to go school, work, and/or with groups of friends
Offer alternatives, accurate information, etc., when you hear homophobic stereotypes or myths
Write articles for a newspaper on LGBT issues, write letters to the editor

Confront Over Incidents
Interrupt heterosexist/gendered jokes, slurs, comments, or assumptions
Actively react to anonymous anti-gay graffiti
Make clear to all who are involved both the relevant policies and your own feelings
Provide support to the victim/target of the attack
Critically review local media for heterosexual bias and call/write editors with complaints/suggestions

Take a Public Stand
Wear a button such as “I support gay rights” or “How dare you presume I’m heterosexual?”
Attend a rally or march supporting LGBT people; write a letter to the school paper
Sign a petition supporting gay rights
Promote LGBT nondiscrimination policies
Campaign to pass gay rights bills
Form a support/activist group for heterosexual allies
Organize to get more resources on your campus

Source: Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Safe Zone Training Manual, January 2012