

How to be an Ally


have**THAT** talk



What is an Ally?

Allies are people that actively work to fight against racism and other forms of discrimination such as gender, disability, and religious, despite not experiencing it themselves. Allies are supportive individuals that can use the advantages they have to help others. As a community, it is everybody's duty to stop and prevent racism and other types of discrimination. Allies can be better equipped to challenge unfair beliefs and practices by:

- Listening to the experiences of those who have been discriminated against.
- Learning about the practices and laws that can affect marginalized communities.

Allies can show their support by standing in unity against discrimination, unfair judgements, and other forms of oppression. Because discrimination impacts mental health, the support received from an ally can greatly improve a person's mental health outcomes. In other words, the sooner someone can get help, the better. There are many ways to show support, such as standing up for a person being targeted or supporting them privately. In situations where it is unsafe or uncomfortable to step in, an ally can still help others by connecting them to local community resources or calling for help.

Key Messages

- Allies can help others feel safe when talking about discrimination, even if they have not experienced it for themselves.
- Allies can support the mental health of others by connecting individuals to resources sooner and preventing them from being targeted.
- It is important not to judge or question other people's experiences. This can help them feel safer when sharing their feelings and become more comfortable asking for support.
- Anyone can be an ally using the tips below:
 - 1) Reflect:**
 - Question stereotypes & negative assumptions.
 - Be aware of your own prejudices.
 - Think about the ways you benefit from being a member of a privileged group.
 - 2) Learn:**
 - Listen to and respect the perspectives of those who say discrimination is occurring.
 - Ask people how they want to be identified or described.
 - Be open to feedback - learn from your mistakes and try again.
 - 3) Practice:**
 - Speak out against discrimination.
 - Discourage the use of hurtful words to describe people.
 - Challenge rules and practices that make it hard for people to get the support they need.
 - Consider using trigger warnings when sharing content on social media. A trigger warning is statement at the start of a text, video, image, or other form of media that alerts others about upsetting or distressing content.

Additional Resources

English

- [Guide to Allyship](#)
- [Indigenous Ally Toolkit](#)
- [McGill University: Allyship Toolkits](#)
- [Workplace Allyship](#)

French

- [Trousse d'outils pour les allié-es aux luttes autochtones](#)
- [Trousses d'outils pour les alliés](#)
- [À faire ou à éviter pour être un bon allié au travail](#)

Activity 1: How to be an Ally

Goal

- Speak out against discrimination.
- Be aware of racism and discrimination.
- Learn strategies to support individuals who experience racism and discrimination.
- Help participants know how to respond to racism.
- Help participants know how to be an ally and use anti-racism strategies.

Messages

- Discrimination occurs in many areas of our community. It is present in schools, public transportation, recreational parks, and neighbourhoods.
- Experiencing discrimination affects people in many ways. It may lead to trauma, anxiety, depression, lower self-esteem, and identity issues.
- Anyone can be an ally. Allies speak up against discrimination. They promote diversity and equality.

Time

- 20-30 minutes.

Supplies

- Video: [*“How to be an Ally.”*](#)
- Flipchart paper, markers.

Activity

- View the video: *“How to be an Ally?”*
- Split your participants into groups and provide each group with one flip chart paper and markers.
- Assign one scenario (found in the “Scenarios for Discussion” sheet below) to each group. Have the participants write their scenario on the flip chart paper and answer the questions below. When everyone has written down their ideas, take turns to share and discuss their answers with the larger group.
 1. Does this scenario include an act of allyship (agree or disagree)?
 2. What can you do to be an ally in this situation?

Scenarios for Discussion:

1. Your co-worker shares with you that he is being discriminated against at work because of his mental health. You do not want to get in trouble, so you decide not to get involved.
2. Allison is at the mall and hears an individual saying to woman of Asian descent, “go back to your own country.” Allison decides to walk away from the situation because she believes it’s none of her business.
3. Jessica is talking with her friend, Rob, about racism and how it affects our society. Rob says that racism doesn’t exist anymore because we have anti-discrimination laws that eliminate racism. Jessica doesn’t want to cause any conflict, so she does not respond.
4. Katie witnesses her teacher telling Shawna that her dream of being a sports anchor will never come true because she is in a wheelchair. Katie does not want to get in trouble, so she does not do anything.
5. Sam tells you that he thinks people use the “race card” to make excuses, and that nobody is actually affected by racism anymore. You have not personally experienced racism, so you decide that it is not your problem to educate Sam.

Possible Answers:

- None of these scenarios include acts of allyship.
- If I was the ally in this situation, I would:

1)	• Practice active listening. • Ask him how he feels and how you can help him feel better. • Work with him to report the harassment and discrimination to the manager.
2)	• Approach the situation in a calm manner. • Educate the individual about racism and its impacts on people. • Provide emotional support to the victim and remain with her until she feels better.
3)	• Explain to Rob that recognizing the prevalence of modern-day racism is the first step to being an ally. • Educate Rob on anti-racism strategies. • Teach Rob how to be an ally and invite him to watch the “how to be an ally” video on HaveTHATtalk.ca. • Show Rob some recent examples of racism and discrimination in the media.
4)	• Listen to and validate Shawna’s feelings. • Help Shawna report her teacher. • Advocate for the school to have anti-discrimination policies.
5)	• Educate Sam on the impacts of racism and provide him with educational resources. • Show Sam examples of modern-day racism and microaggressions.

Activity 2: Supporting Others Through Allyship

Goal

- To brainstorm ways to be an ally.
- To have a discussion about allyship, including different ways to be a strong ally.

Messages

- Knowing how to be an ally is an important skill.
- There are many ways to be an ally – you can do what feels the most comfortable to you.
- Anyone can learn to be an ally by using these strategies: listen, respect, ask, and learn.

Time

- 15-20 minutes.

Supplies

- Video: [*“How to be an Ally.”*](#)
- Flipchart paper, markers.

Activity

- View the video: *“How to be an Ally.”*
- Split participants into groups. Provide a flipchart paper and markers to each group.
- Ask participants to brainstorm and write down ways that they can be an ally, and why allyship is important.
- When they are done, ask them to share their answers with the larger group.
- Discuss the answers and encourage participants to have a conversation about their ideas.

Possible Answers:

Allyship is important because:	• It helps people feel safe. • It protects people when they are experiencing discrimination. • It can create a stronger community. • It can help you learn more and educate others.
Ways to be a strong ally:	• Standing up for someone when they experience discrimination. • Teaching friends and family about the reasons why racism and discrimination are wrong. • Addressing and correcting the negative

	beliefs that some friends and family might have. • Learning about and educating yourself on racism and discrimination. • Reporting acts of racism and discrimination. • Supporting someone who has experienced discrimination by sharing resources with them or listening to them.
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