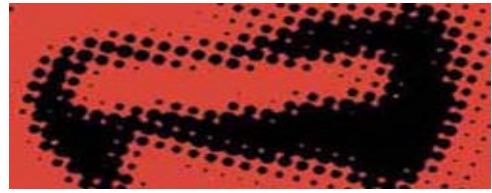


Transgender Day of Remembrance

What is it about and what can you do?



Vocabulary

Gender Expression:
Refers to the ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, and emphasizing, de-emphasizing, or changing their bodies' characteristics. Gender expression is not necessarily an indication of sexual orientation.

Gender Identity:
A term that describes an individual's innermost sense of self as 'male/masculine,' 'female/feminine,' somewhere in between, or somewhere outside of these gender designations. Sometimes this "innermost sense" does not correspond with anatomy (e.g. a person may be assigned male at birth, but identifies as female).

Genderqueer:
A person who rejects the binary gender model of male/female. A genderqueer individual may feel partly male and female or that they have no gender at all.

What is the history Transgender Day of Remembrance?

Transgender Day of Remembrance is held in November in honor of Rita Hester, a trans-woman who was murdered in her apartment just outside Boston, Mass., on the night of Nov. 28, 1998. Rita died of multiple stab wounds, and her murder—like a lot of anti-transgender murder cases—has not been solved. Her murder caused the creation of "Remembering Our Dead," a web project (www.rememberingourdead.org) dedicated to immortalizing the names of those persons killed because of anti-transgender hatred or prejudice. A candlelight vigil held in San Francisco in 1999 is seen as the first Day of Remembrance event. Since then, events have been organized in numerous cities in the U.S. as well as in various countries around the world on November 20 every year.

What is the purpose of the Day of Remembrance?

The Transgender Day of Remembrance serves many purposes. On a national level, the day is a time for remembrance, mourning and to raise awareness of hate crimes against transgender people and people who are targeted because of their gender identity and/or gender expression. It is important to remember that this day is not only a day for action, but also a day for education and for people who do not identify as transgender to become an ally and stand up for the rights of individuals who have been the victim of harassment, bullying and name calling because of their gender identity and/or gender expression. You can organize a Transgender Day of Remembrance in many ways that can be useful and effective in your school and/or community.

What are the guiding principles of the Day of Remembrance?

Here are some of the guiding principles developed by the original organizers of the Day of Remembrance. You can use these words and ideas to help frame your message, tone and goals for the day.

- "Those who cannot remember the past are doomed to repeat it." (Santayana)
- All who die due to anti-transgender violence are to be remembered.
- It is up to us to remember these people, since their killers, law enforcement, and the media often seek to erase their existence.
- Transgender lives are affirmed as valuable.
- We can make a difference by being visible, speaking out, educating and organizing around anti-transgender violence, and that can effect change and stop the flood of violence against Transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals.

Here are some of the guiding principles developed by GLSEN.

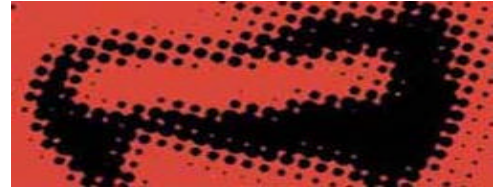
- It is important to celebrate transgender people and experiences.
- It is important to celebrate diversity and people's self-defined gender identities and expressions.
- It is important to act in life-affirming and anti-oppressive ways.

What can I do in my school to make a difference?

The Transgender Day of Remembrance in school is an opportunity for you, the students, to stand up for the rights of all individuals, regardless of their gender identity and/or expression. Maybe you want to focus on spreading awareness of Transgender people and experiences; maybe there has been an incident at your school that you want to bring to attention, like bullying and name-calling; maybe you are trying to get gender inclusivity in your school's non-discrimination policy or organize for gender neutral bathrooms (bathrooms safe for any gender to use)—whatever your goals are surrounding issues of gender identity and/or gender expression, organizing and participating in the Transgender Day of Remembrance can be a great way to honor those whose lives have been taken, to celebrate transgender people and experiences, and to take steps towards stopping gender-based violence and harassment.

Transgender Day of Remembrance

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Vocabulary

Hir/Zi/Sie:

Terms used to serve as gender-neutral third person singular pronouns in English. Zi/sie takes the subject position (*as a substitute for he or she*), while hir serves as a direct object (*as a substitute for her or he*).

Transphobia:

The violent and irrational fear of another person based on that person's gender identity or gender expression.

Transgender:

This term loosely refers to people who do not identify with the gender roles assigned to them by society based on their biological sex. Transgender is also used as an umbrella term for all those who do not conform to "traditional" notions of gender expression and includes people who identify as transsexual, two-spirit or as a drag queen/king.

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What have students done in their own high/middle school?

Below you will find examples of what students all around the country have done for Transgender Day of Remembrance in our Transgender Day of Remembrance Line-up. If you have any questions, check out: www.dayofsilence.org/tdr for more information about Transgender Day of Remembrance. If you would like to get in touch with a student in your region that might be able to help you organize a Transgender Day of Remembrance event register on www.studentorganizing.org for a list of Jump-Start Student Organizers in your state who can provide many types of support. Also, on this site you can sign-up for Transgender Day of Remembrance and receive free products like stickers or armbands!

Transgender Day of Remembrance Line-up

All of these stories are great organizing ideas. You can hit an organizing grand slam, or just bunt and stay on first. Any and/or all of these ideas is sure to help you slide into your organizing bases. You're on deck! Be sure to register at www.studentorganizing.org

First base

Jenna from New York gave out stickers and armbands they received from GLSEN. These tools were very effective for them. Students became very interested in the events of the day and the message they were conveying. Jenna reported more than 40 students wearing stickers and armbands. Isabel from Wisconsin also passed out stickers and armbands as well as organizing a moment of silence held after school to observe Transgender Day of Remembrance.

Second base

Jessica in Colorado along with the members of her Gay-Straight Alliance wore Transgender Day of Remembrance armbands. Jessica also facilitated a workshop called "Where is the 'T' in your GSA?" from Jump-Start VIII. After the workshop participants watched "Boys Don't Cry" and discussed transgender issues.

Third base

At Talia's school in Illinois they created a display. After tracing 23 outlines of their bodies onto paper and cutting them out, her student club did some research on www.rememberingourdead.com about the lives of people who had been killed because of their gender identity and/or gender expression. After doing this research they then pasted a picture of that person on the cut-outs and wrote a personalized story about their life including their hobbies, their goals, and their interests.

Home run

Jerome in California organized an hour-long assembly for the entire Senior class to attend. At the assembly there was a transgender keynote speaker, and a panel discussion of students from various student clubs from Jerome's school. Jerome and his GSA passed out armbands and stickers as the Senior class filed out of the door after the assembly.

Grand slam

Chris and Dot from Vermont organized week-long Transgender Day of Remembrance activities with different events occurring each day. Some of the events included a "Memory Wall" of transgender people who have been killed, a movie night and discussion on the film "Transamerica", and a bake sale to donate funds to a shelter that services transgender teens.

Seventh Inning stretch

Still up for the pitch? For more organizing line drives be sure to check out www.dayofsilence.org/tdr