



be in • be out • belong

Day of Silence

What is it?

Founded in 1996, the Day of Silence raises awareness of the discrimination and erasure people in the LGBTQIA+ community face. Two college students from the University of Virginia started it and now hundreds of middle schools, high schools, and colleges participate in the Day of Silence each year.

When is it?

The Day of Silence is held on a Friday in April every year. In 2021, it takes place on Friday, April 23rd. The theme for 2021 is *My Silence, My Story*.

How do I participate?

People in the LGBTQIA+ community and allies take part in the Day of Silence in many ways. The most common way is to take a vow of silence for the day. People are symbolically choosing to be silent to draw attention to the forced silence and erasure LGBTQIA+ people have faced. In the evening, everyone breaks the silence with speeches, open mics, and rallies. GLSEN has a virtual Breaking the Silence rally on April 23rd at 6pm central time on their Instagram page...

[https:// www.instagram.com/glsen/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/glsen/?hl=en)

There is more than one way to participate in the Day of Silence. You can choose to be verbally silent, but still type or write or you can refrain from any forms of communication, the choice is up to you. Some people are silent for the whole day, or part of it, or not at all. The point is to raise awareness and actively work against erasure and discrimination of the LGBTQIA+ community and whatever way you choose to participate is right for you.

What else can I do?

Day of Silence is a day of action with the goal of raising awareness. In the words of one of the founders, Maria Pulzetti, "I wanted to do something . . . that would impact many people at the school and that would be very visible." The Qube has Day of Silence buttons to wear and cards to hand out to people . However, this is just a starting point. Other ideas include writing to your elected representatives, posting about the Day of Silence on social media, writing poetry, and breaking the silence with your friends at the end of day.

What if I experience pushback?

If you are participating in the Day of Silence, it can help to communicate with your professors and/or workplace ahead of time and most should be accommodating. You are in your right to participate in the Day of Silence because it is a form of peaceful protest and free speech. If you are facing any resistance, feel free to contact the Qube to find more resources.

Where can I learn more?

The Day of Silence is organized by the GLSEN and their website has some good resources on how to participate in-person and virtually.

<https://www.glsen.org/day-of-silence>

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