

## Action Continuum

Discriminatory

Allying

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

**1 = Actively Participating** ...includes actions that directly support gay/lesbian oppression. These actions include laughing at or telling jokes that make fun of gays/lesbians, making fun of people who do not fit traditional gender roles, and engaging in physical or verbal harassment of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, or heterosexuals who do not conform to traditional gender-roles. It includes working for anti-gay legislation.

**2 = Denying or Ignoring** ...includes inaction that supports gay/lesbian oppression coupled with an unwillingness or inability to understand the effects of homophobic or heterosexist actions. This stage is characterized by a “business as usual” attitude. Though responses in this stage are not directly homophobic or heterosexist, the passive acceptance of these actions by others serves to support their system of gay/lesbian oppression.

**3 = Recognizing, but no action**...is characterized by a recognition of homophobic or heterosexist actions, and the harmful effect of these actions. However, this recognition does not result in action to interrupt the homophobic or heterosexist situation. Taking action is prevented by homophobia or a lack of knowledge about specific actions to take. This stage of response is accompanied by discomfort due to the lack of congruence between recognizing homophobia or heterosexism yet failing to act on this recognition. An example of this stage of response is a person hearing a friend tell a “fag joke”, recognizing that it is homophobic, not laughing at the joke, but saying nothing to the friend,

**4 = Recognizing and interrupting** ...includes not only recognizing homophobic and heterosexist actions, but also taking action to stop them. Though the response goes no further than stopping, this stage is often an important transition from passively accepting homophobic or heterosexist actions to actively choosing anti-homophobic and anti-heterosexist actions. In this stage, a person hearing a “fag joke” would not laugh and would tell the joke teller that jokes that put down gays/lesbians are not funny.

**5 = Educating Self** ...includes taking action to learn more about gays and lesbians, heterosexism and homophobia. These actions can include reading books, attending workshops, talking to others, joining organizations, or any other activity that can increase awareness and knowledge. This stage is a prerequisite for the last three stages.

**6 = Questioning and Dialoguing**...is an attempt to begin educating others about homophobia and heterosexism. This stage goes beyond interrupting homophobic and heterosexist interactions to engage people in dialogue about these issues. Through the use of questions and dialogue, this response attempts to help others increase their awareness and knowledge about homophobia and heterosexism.

**7 = Supporting and Encouraging**...includes actions that support and encourage anti-homophobic and anti-heterosexist actions of others. Overcoming the homophobia that keeps people from interrupting this form of oppression even when they are offended by it is difficult. Supporting and encouraging others who are able to take this risk is an important part of reinforcing anti-homophobic and anti-heterosexist behavior.

**8 = Initiating and Preventing**...includes actions that actively anticipate and identify homophobic institutional practices or individual actions and works to change them. Example: teachers changing a “Family Life” curriculum that is heterosexist and homophobic.