

# HOW TO DEAL WITH TROLLS AND BULLIES

TEXAS STATE LAW IS CLEAR THAT BOTH IN-PERSON AND ELECTRONIC HARASSMENT AND THREATS ARE ILLEGAL



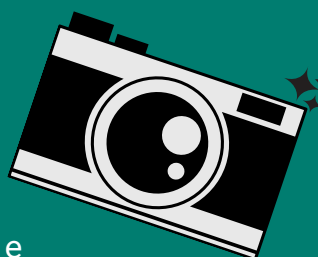
## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, FIRST.

Haters are part of life. Unfortunately for the LGBTQAI2+ community, our haters can be very loud. Avoid engaging with bullies – you never know what they're capable of. No matter where you encounter bullies or trolls, know that you matter and you deserve to be and feel safe and respected!

Building a strong self-care routine now will serve you forever, so go on and take a bubble bath, paint your nails, read a book, play a game, listen to music or eat your favorite snack. And don't forget about community care!

## IRL BULLIES

- Everyone at GSA meetings should sign a confidentiality agreement
- Know you can remove someone from the club if they behave harmfully
- Put posters up in areas authorities are likely to notice vandalism
- Know your school's and district's policies about bullying and harassment
- Document any verbal threats or harassment by journaling about it right away – be sure to include the date, time, and names of any witnesses
- Getting away from someone who is behaving (or threatening to behave) violently is always the safest option
- Call for help, or if you can't access a phone, yell, "Help! Fire!"
- The safest position to be in during a physical attack is the fetal position – with your back against a wall, knees pulled up to your chest, head tucked down and your arms covering the back of your neck
- If you have been attacked document any bruises, torn clothing, scrapes, disheveled hair, spilled backpack contents, etc. with pictures, whether you're injured or not
- Talk with an adult you trust about what happened, even if you don't want a report made



## DIGITAL TROLLS

- Written communication can be easily misinterpreted – when possible move important or sensitive discussions offline
- Don't engage in heated arguments on the internet
- Everyone has the right to unfollow, unfriend, ban, block and report anyone who is behaving hatefully online – you don't owe community to anyone who is not willing to help you build it
- Be selective about membership in your digital groups, whether it's online or a group text, to protect club members' privacy
- Protect club accounts with strong passwords that few people know
- Use private or secret groups on social media, turn off GPS and location tagging, and do not take (or share!) people's pictures without their consent
- Never, ever read the comments on news stories!
- Document any threatening emails, direct messages, texts, comments, etc. with screenshots and be sure to include the date and time

## USEFUL LINKS



[CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT](#)

[BEST PRACTICES ON CONFIDENTIALITY](#)

[BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICIES](#)