



Rainbow Alliance Mission Statement and Guidelines

It is the mission of the Olean Public Library Rainbow Alliance to promote tolerance and acceptance throughout the community and to provide a safe, nonjudgmental space for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and straight youth to express themselves and share experiences. All youth are welcome to attend the Rainbow Alliance regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. This peer-run support group is a confidential and safe environment for youth to discuss the issues associated with being LGBTQIA in a rural community.

Meeting Guidelines:

- The librarian is a facilitator of the meetings but cannot provide counseling. If necessary, the librarian may refer participants to resources that can assist them with specific issues.
- Participants should respect each other's privacy. Assume that stories and comments shared at meetings should remain private.
- Don't make blanket statements about any groups of people. (In addition to members of the LGBT community, this also includes political parties, religious groups, socioeconomic classes, age ranges, etc.) If you're not sure that something you want to say is factually correct, phrase it as a question.
- Use "I" statements. Everyone should speak from his/her/hir own experiences.
- People should not assume other people's experiences or anything else. The only assumption people should make is that when other participants speak, they are speaking with the best intentions and do not mean to offend anyone.
- Participants need to be respectful of one another at all times.
- Do not assume that all participants are "out" to the community, friends, or family and do not participate in any gossip, conversations, or actions that could result in outing a member of the Rainbow Alliance.