

Day of Silence—What Should Parents Do?

1. Call your local schools and ask whether they permit students or teachers to remain silent in the classroom on “Day of Silence.” **IMPORTANT:** Do *not* ask any administrator, school board member, or teacher if the school *sponsors, endorses, or supports* DOS. Schools do not technically sponsor the Day of Silence. Technically, it is *students*, often students in the gay-straight alliance, who sponsor it. Many administrators will tell you that they do not sponsor the DOS when, in fact, they *do* permit students and sometimes even teachers to remain silent during instructional time. Also ask administrators whether they permit teachers to create lesson plans to accommodate student silence.
2. Email your children’s teachers to ask whether they will be permitting students to remain silent in class on DOS and whether they will be creating lesson plans to accommodate student silence. Sometimes there is a disconnect between what administrators or school board members believe is taking place in classrooms and what actually takes place.
3. Be sure to find out what date the event is planned for *your* school. (The national date in 2011 is April 15, but some schools observe DOS on a different date).
4. Inform the school of your intention to keep your children home on that date and explain why. (A sample letter is available.)
5. Explain to your children why you’re taking a stand:
 - a. Homosexual behavior is not an innate identity.
 - b. No matter what factors may influence homosexual feelings, freely chosen homosexual behavior is immoral and should be resisted.
 - c. Homosexuality is not equivalent to race.
 - d. Disapproval of homosexuality is not equivalent to racism; nor is it hatred; nor is it bullying; nor does it constitute an incitement to violence. It is permissible and ethical to express disapproval of homosexuality. Just because someone may feel bad when hearing that someone disapproves of homosexuality does not mean that disapproval is cruel or wrong.
 - e. No school should support a view of homosexuality that is unproven and controversial, and that is physically, emotionally, and spiritually destructive to individuals and society.
 - f. No school should allow instructional time to be politicized.
6. Encourage your church leadership to follow the bold example of Pastor Ken Hutcherson who vocally opposed “Day of Silence” in his community in Redmond, Washington. He led the Walkout in his community, and over 600 out of 1,400 students were called out of school on the Day of Silence. Let your light shine by spreading the word to your church and neighbors. Explain that school districts lose money for every absence, which may help convince administrations and school boards that it is not merely unethical but fiscally irresponsible to allow the classroom to be used for political purposes.