



STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL'S SPARK PROGRAM



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SOME WAYS TO BECOME MORE TOLERANT!

The more we learn about people who are different from us, the more tolerant, accepting and welcoming we become. It's easy to dislike or even hate someone we don't know and may fear. It's hard to dislike or hate someone we know as a friend.

Try these ideas from the Southern Poverty Law Center, a non-profit organization that combats hate, intolerance and discrimination. Please visit their website at www.tolerance.org



- ❑ **Attend an event, play, listen to music or go to a dance performance by artists/performers whose race or ethnicity is different from your own.**



- ❑ **Volunteer at a local social services organization.**
- ❑ **Attend services at a variety of churches, synagogues and temples to learn about different faiths.**

cultural heritage

- ❑ **Ask a person of another cultural heritage to teach you how to perform a traditional dance or cook a traditional meal.**



- ❑ **Learn sign language.**
- ❑ **Take a conversation course in another language that is spoken in your community.**

**CHANGE ATTITUDES.
CHANGE BEHAVIORS.
CHANGE DIRECTIONS.
CHANGE LIVES.
CHANGE POLICIES.
CHANGE VOICES.
BE AN ALLY.
BE THE CHANGE.**

- ❑ **Speak up when you hear slurs.** Let people know that **bias speech is always unacceptable.**
- ❑ **Research your family history.** Share information about your heritage in talks with others.
- ❑ **List all the stereotypes you can – positive and negative – about a particular group.** Are these stereotypes reflected in your actions?
- ❑ **Think about how you appear to others.** List personality traits that are compatible with tolerance (i.e. compassion, curiosity, openness etc.).
Now, list those that seem incompatible with tolerance (i.e. jealousy, bossiness, perfectionism).



- ❑ **Create a “diversity profile” of your friends and acquaintances.** Set the goal of expanding it next year.

MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT... REASONS TO BECOME MORE TOLERANT!

- ❑ **The more you learn, the less you fear.** Have you ever had a preconceived notion about a person then found out you were wrong once you got to know him or her? **That's how tolerance begins.** Once you learn you have nothing to fear, you become willing to try more new things, ideas and people. As you practice tolerance and become more comfortable with differences by experiencing them firsthand through relationships, **curiosity replaces fears.** Your mind opens. You start respecting other people's opinions, practices and behaviors. You gain a deeper understanding of yourself and others. It's easy to hate a stereotype, hard to hate someone you know and understand.
- ❑ **Tolerant people are more self-confident and comfortable in all kinds of situations.** Who wouldn't like to feel safer and more secure anytime, anywhere? Studies have shown that people who get along with different kinds of people are emotionally and physically healthier – and more successful in their careers – **than those who don't.**
- ❑ **Tolerance makes life more interesting.** What if you were allowed to read books by only one author? If you had to wear blue jeans, white t-shirts and black sneakers everyday? What if you were never allowed to try anything new, not even a new soft drink or video game? What if all your friends looked, thought and behaved exactly alike? What if they all had to be the same age, religion, gender and race etc.? Boring! **That's what life without diversity would be like.**
- ❑ **Read a book or watch a movie about another culture.**

**“The highest result of education is tolerance.”
– Helen Keller**