

Book Title: *Rainbow Allies: The True Story of Kids Who Stood Against Hate*

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Age Range: 3–9

Grades: PreK–3rd

Identities/Lived Experiences/Themes in This Book

- Feelings
- Friendship
- Kindness
- Standing up for self/others
- Community
- Identity affirmation
- Identity safety
- General racial/ethnic diversity
- White/European American
- Same-Gender relationships

Literacy Connections

- Identify details in the text
- Compare and contrast events
- Identify theme or main message
- Character point of view
- Use illustrations/pictures/photos to gain information
- Make predictions
- Make inferences
- Make text connections (to self, text, the world)
- Describe major plot events
- Sequence events

Anti-Bias Education	Social-Emotional Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy and Understanding • Healthy Complex Identities • Respect Across Differences • Notice, Name, and Reject Bias • Responsiveness and Action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Awareness • Self-Management • Social Awareness • Relationship Skills • Responsible Decision-Making

Background Information for Adults

This story is based on a real-life event that happened in August 2016. All of the characters in the story are real, including the dogs! Read the **Author's Note** at the back of the book for more information. You can also watch a short news clip on the story here, which might be great to show children after reading the book: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-M3l4TAJzw8&t=28s>.



Rainbow Allies is also a wonderful book for helping children consider what it means to be an ally. Children are born with an innate capacity for empathy, but empathy is a skill that needs to be nurtured and developed. This book is a great resource for helping children develop their sense of empathy as they grapple with the impacts of bias and prejudice towards a lesbian couple. It is this sense of empathy that can empower children to act and respond in supportive, caring ways, as the children in the book do. Be sure to read the section, **How to Be an LGBTQ Ally**, at the end to learn more ways to be an ally.

For more information about supporting children with LGBTQ+ families and how to navigate conversations with children about diverse family structures, see the **Diverse Family Structures Primer**.

Vocabulary:

Ally – A person who chooses to stand up for others who are treated unfairly. An ally uses their voice and actions to help make things more fair for everyone. Even if they are not being treated unfairly themselves, allies know it's important to speak up and learn how to make the world more kind and just for all people.

Symbol – A picture, shape, or object that stands for something else. For example, a heart is a symbol of love, and a stop sign is a symbol that tells cars to stop. Symbols help us understand ideas without using words. A flag is a symbol that represents a country, a group of people, or an idea. Flags help people feel connected and show pride, belonging, or support—without using words.

The **rainbow flag** is a symbol that represents LGBTQ+ people and the idea that everyone should be accepted and loved for who they are. It shows support for people of all genders and sexual identities and is a sign of pride, inclusion, and equality. Each color in the flag stands for something important.

- **Red** stands for life.
- **Orange** means healing.
- **Yellow** represents sunlight.
- **Green** symbolizes nature.
- **Blue** stands for harmony.
- **Violet** represents spirit.

There are many Pride flags that represent different LGBTQ+ identities. To see more flags and understand their meanings, see the Human Rights Campaign's website on LGBTQ+ Pride Flags:

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/lgbtq-pride-flags>



A Brief History of Pride to Share with Children

For a long time, LGBTQ+ people were treated unfairly and told to hide who they were. Many people felt afraid or ashamed because of the way society treated them. Everything began to change in June 1969, when LGBTQ+ people at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City, stood up to police who were raiding the bar. This act of resistance, led by trans women of color like Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, sparked days of protest and is seen as the start of the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement.

One year later, people organized the first Pride march in New York City to remember Stonewall and to stand up for equal rights. They used the word "Pride" to show that being LGBTQ+ is something to celebrate, not hide. "We are not ashamed—we are proud of who we are!"

Since then, every year in June, people all over the world celebrate Pride. Pride means being proud of who you are, standing up for fairness, and showing that everyone deserves love, respect, and kindness—no matter who they are or who they love.

Reflection Questions for Adults Reading This Book to Children

1. What messages did you get from your family or school about people's ability to make change?
2. Think about an incident in which you experienced prejudice or were discriminated against. What did you do? Did anyone stand up for you, support you, or help you make sense of what happened?
3. Think about an incident in which you observed prejudice or discrimination directed at someone else. Did anyone stand up for that person? What did you do? How do you feel today about what you saw and did?











Book Summary to Read to Children Before Reading the Book

When a lesbian couple, Cari and Lauri, return home to discover their Pride flag missing and their front porch covered in eggs, the comfort and connection they once felt in their neighborhood suddenly feel shaken. They begin to wonder—do they still belong? Are they truly safe? But just when things feel uncertain, the neighborhood kids step up to help. Based on a real-life story, the children come together with kindness and creativity to show Cari, Lauri, and their dogs, Twink and Scout, that they are loved and supported.

Discussion Questions
(essential questions in **bold**)

1. At the beginning of the story, Brendon describes his neighborhood as being very welcoming. What are some examples in the book of how the neighborhood was a welcoming community?
2. A symbol is a picture, shape, or object that stands for something else. A flag is a symbol that represents a country, a group of people, or an idea. Flags help people feel connected and show pride, belonging, or support—without using words.
 - a. **Why do you think putting a rainbow flag on their house was important to Cari and Lauri?**
 - b. What is a symbol that is important to you?
3. **How do you think Cari and Lauri felt when their home was egged and their flag was torn down?**
4. Brendan and his friends wanted to do something to support Cari and Lauri. *“They needed to find a way to bring everyone together, to show love that was big enough to heal the hurt.”* What were some of their initial ideas, and why wouldn’t those have worked to “bring people together and heal the hurt”?
5. **What plan did Brendan and his friends end up coming up with? Was it effective in “bringing people together and healing the hurt”?**
6. **Based on the book, how would you define what an ally is?** (A person who chooses to stand up for others who are treated unfairly. An ally uses their voice and actions to help make things more fair for everyone.)
 - a. **Why do we need allies?**
 - b. **What is a way that you can be an ally when you see someone who needs support and is hurting?**

Journal Prompts and Extension Activities


1. **Write or Draw:** Think about a time when you were treated unfairly or saw someone else treated unfairly. What did you do? What did other people do? Did you or anyone else stand up for fairer treatment? How could being or having an ally in that situation have helped?
2. **Ally Flags:** Read the **How to Be an LGBTQ Ally** section at the back of the book. Brainstorm other ways that people can be allies. Give children construction paper and art materials. Have children create an ally flag with symbols, words, and drawings that show support for others (like using rainbows, hearts, linked hands, or words like “welcome,” “respect,” or “belonging”).
3. **“I Can Be an Ally When...” Mini-Book:** This project helps children understand what it means to be an ally, recognize real-world ways to show support and kindness, and build empathy and connection through storytelling and art. Children will create a mini-book that includes words and actions on how they can stand up for others and be an ally. Each page includes a prompt that children complete with drawing and/or writing. Younger children can dictate their responses.
 - a. **COVER PAGE**
 -  Title: *I Can Be an Ally When...*
 -  Space for child’s name and cover illustration
 - b. **PAGE 1**
 -  *I can be an ally when someone is left out...*
 -  Example: “I can invite them to play.”
 - c. **PAGE 2**
 -  *I can be an ally when someone is different from me...*
 -  Example: “I can learn about them and ask kind questions.”
 - d. **PAGE 3**
 -  *I can be an ally when someone is being teased or hurt...*
 -  Example: “I can tell them they matter and get help from an adult.”
 - e. **PAGE 4**
 -  *I can be an ally at school when...*
 -  Example: “I sit with a new student at lunch.”


f. **PAGE 5**

 *I can be an ally in my neighborhood when...*


 Example: "I decorate my window with rainbow hearts to show love."

g. **PAGE 6**

 *When I am an ally, I feel...*

 Example: "Proud, strong, and kind."

h. **BACK COVER**

 *This book belongs to: _____*

 Optional student portrait or fingerprint "stamp" to personalize

Find more lessons in the
AmazeWorks Family Pride
book set, available here:

[https://amazeworks.org/product/
book-set-family-pride/](https://amazeworks.org/product/book-set-family-pride/)

