

Four Questions for LGBTQ+ Liberation

By Jon Cohen, Director of Community Mobilization



1. A Question Someone Might Not Know Who or How to Ask: Why should I, as a Jewish person, care about LGBTQ+ rights?

- Jewish values emphasize justice (tzedek), human dignity (kavod), and loving our neighbor (v'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha)
- The history of Jewish activism in civil rights, labor movements, and immigration justice aligns with fighting for LGBTQ+ equality
- Many LGBTQ+ people are part of the Jewish community — this is about advocating for our own

2. A Simple Question: How can I support LGBTQ+ rights if I don't identify as LGBTQ+?/take action with my local Jewish community?

- Being an ally means listening, learning, and using your voice to amplify LGBTQ+ issues
- Show up for LGBTQ+ events, sign petitions, and support inclusive policies in your synagogue and workplace
- Challenge harmful language and assumptions in your community and family spaces
 - Have hard conversations — discomfort is part of solidarity
 - Push past fear — Doing the right thing isn't always easy, but it's necessary
- Commit to the long-term — This isn't just a crisis moment; it's a movement
- Show up beyond your immediate circles – Build relationships outside your usual spaces

For advocating within your Jewish institution:

- Join [Thrive: The Jewish Coalition to Defend Trans and LGBTQ+ Youth](#)
- [How Your Jewish Community Can Be a Safe Haven for Trans People](#)
- Bring Keshet's [Education & Training](#) team to your Jewish spaces to ensure that LGBTQ+ youth, families, and staff are affirmed in all Jewish educational and community settings





For individuals:

- [Jewish Pledge for Trans Dignity](#)
- Attend Keshet [advocacy events](#)
- Learn more about Keshet [Youth Programs](#) for LGBTQ+ Jewish youth and allies aged 13-24
- Change the narrative that faith and LGBTQ+ rights are incompatible: advocate for policies that protect LGBTQ+ individuals in local and state government
 - [Contact your elected officials from home!](#)

3. A Rebellious Question: What are the biggest threats to LGBTQ+ rights right now?

- Legislative attacks on trans rights
 - Bans on gender-affirming healthcare
 - Anti-trans sports bans
 - Book bans and curriculum censorship that erase LGBTQ+ history and identities
- The rise in hate crimes and misinformation targeting LGBTQ+ people

4. A Wise Question: How do I respond when people use Judaism to argue against LGBTQ+ inclusion?/What's the best way to engage people unsure or hesitant about LGBTQ+ advocacy?

- Focus on shared values: dignity, fairness, and community
- Use personal stories — people are more likely to empathize with lived experiences
- Offer clear, simple actions they can take, like signing a petition or attending an event
- Jewish tradition is vast and diverse; many Jewish texts and scholars emphasize justice, dignity, and inclusion
- The concept of “pikuach nefesh” (saving a life) teaches us that protecting LGBTQ+ people from harm should be a priority
- Historically, interpretations of Jewish law have evolved—just as Judaism has embraced new understandings of ethics and justice
- Resource: [Talking About Anti-Trans Legislation Through a Jewish Lens](#)

