

10 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO CREATE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

1 Do not inquire about a student's immigration status. Students may have legitimate fears about disclosing this information. Educators and other personnel should not make assumptions about students' immigration status.

2 Do all you can to identify yourself as an ally/supporter; use posters, bookmarks, and stickers to make your support visible. Establish your space as a welcoming space.

3 Convey openness and assurance of confidentiality in discussing the topic, if a student chooses to disclose their immigration status.

4 Use inclusive language such as "undocumented student" "undocumented immigrant" "people without documents," "people without legal status," "unauthorized immigrants." The term "illegal alien" labels people (rather than acts) as illegal, is strongly racialized in its usage, and marks people as not belonging.

5 Learn the facts, relevant policies, and legislation. For instance, every academic year, 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high school in the United States. Currently, around 5%-10% of these 65,000 high school graduates move on to a higher education institution (Gonzales, 2009). Kansas allows undocumented students to pay in-state tuition under certain conditions.

6 Never offer legal advice, or advice on filling out forms (unless you are a lawyer trained in immigration issues or staff person / administrator specifically trained to respond to undocumented students). Incorrect advice could have enormous unintended consequences for students. Instead, urge students to contact appropriate legal or support services.

7 Connect students to local, state or national advocacy and support organizations, to known allies and groups on campus, etc.

8 Be sensitive to the limits that undocumented students face. Not every student is eligible to register to vote, to travel out of the country for Study Abroad, or feels comfortable answering the question "Where are you from?"

9 Advocate for and fund scholarships and financial support for undocumented students.

10 Build your own advocacy and support networks for the undocumented, or join an organization that provides advocacy / support.