



The issue:

YOUTH/SCHOOLS

Nine out of 10 gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students have been verbally or physically harassed or assaulted in the past year.



damn facts

Three out of 4 gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students are called “faggot” or “dyke” at school.¹⁸

Three out of 5 gay and transgender kids feel unsafe at school.¹⁹

Nearly 1 in 5 gay and transgender students have been punched, kicked or injured with a weapon in the past year.²⁰

One in 3 have skipped a day of school because of feeling unsafe.²¹

One-third of students who reported an incident of bullying said school administrators did nothing about it.²²

a project of

Would You Let This Happen to Someone You Love? WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SCHOOLS!

Every day, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth are subject to cruel insults, threats, physical harassment and assault. And it all happens at school.

Gay and transgender youth are far more likely to be bullied in school than their straight peers: Nearly 90% have been verbally or physically harassed or assaulted, compared to 62% of their straight classmates.¹ Approximately 3 out of 4 are frequently called names like “faggot” or “dyke,” at school.²

It happens on school property—on the school bus, in the halls and in classrooms—and in many cases, teachers and administrators are well aware of the problem. They may even be part of the problem.³ Regardless, they do nothing to stop the harassment. Almost a third of students who reported an incident of bullying said that school staff did nothing in response.⁴

In one survey, 95% of secondary school principals reported that students at their schools had been harassed because of their gender expression⁵—but almost one-third recognized their staff are not effective in dealing with homophobic bullying.⁶

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN BULLYING OCCURS!

For gay and transgender students, the harassment they receive at school can color all aspects of their educational experience.

Student absences. Three out of 5 gay and transgender kids feel unsafe at school,⁷ and 1 in 3 have skipped a day of school in the previous month because of it.⁸ In fact, gay and transgender students were more than 4 times more likely to have missed at least 1 day of school in the past month, compared to other students.⁹

Lower achievement. Gay and transgender students who were more frequently bullied had grade point averages that were almost half a grade lower than others.¹⁰

Lower educational aspirations. According to 1 study, gay and transgender students were more likely to report that they did not plan to continue their education past high school than a national sample of students.¹¹ This was even more prominent for those who experienced high levels of victimization.¹²

HOW WE CAN STOP BULLYING!

A lot can be done to stop harassment and bullying against gay and transgender youth.

Safe schools laws and policies. Right now, only 16 states and the District of Columbia have safe schools laws that protect on the basis of sexual orientation; 12 states and the District of Columbia have safe schools laws that also protect on the basis of

More than 60% of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students who are bullied don't report it—because they believe staff will do nothing about it.²³

damn partner



www.glsen.org

GLSEN is the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students.

gender identity or expression.¹³ But such laws have been shown to lower levels of victimization for gay and transgender students.

Gay–Straight Alliances (GSA) at school. Students who attend schools with peer support groups heard fewer homophobic remarks, were subjected to less harassment and assault, and reported feeling a greater part of their school community.¹⁴

And in schools with a GSA, more than 97% of students reported having 1 or more supportive staff, compared to less than 75% of students in schools without a GSA.¹⁵

Teacher training. Students in schools with supportive teachers were less likely to miss school, maintained higher grade point averages and reported higher educational aspirations than those who couldn't identify a supportive teacher.¹⁶

SOMETHING TO GIVE A DAMN ABOUT!

The safety of gay and transgender youth in our schools is something to give a damn about.

When vulnerable kids are put on a school bus every morning, only to get punched and beaten when they arrive at school, we need to give a damn.

When parents are desperately pleading with school administrators to stop the bullying, but they still don't step in to help, we need to give a damn.

And when kids are completing suicide over homophobic taunting at school, we need to give a damn.¹⁷

Because ask yourself:
Would you allow any of this to happen to someone you love?
Or would you give a damn?

It's time for things to change.

WE GIVE A DAMN. DO YOU?

I GIVE A DAMN ABOUT YOUTH IN OUR SCHOOLS! Now What?

- **JOIN THE GIVE A DAMN CAMPAIGN:** The Give A Damn Campaign is for everybody who cares about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality, especially all you straight people out there!
 - Register now at www.wegiveadamn.org
- **GET INFORMED:** Learn more about the issues.
 - Watch a Damn Video or read people's Personal Stories
 - Check out our Damn Blog, which is updated daily
- **GET INVOLVED:** Spread the word about equality to family and friends!
 - Share a Damn Video or tell us your Personal Story
 - Forward this PDF
- **VISIT OUR NON-PROFIT PARTNER'S WEBSITE**
 - The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN): www.glsen.org

www.wegiveadamn.org

1. The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Network (GLSEN). "The 2009 National School Climate Survey," October 2010, and "From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in America," October 2005. www.glsen.org
2. GLSEN. "2009 National School Climate Survey," October 2010. www.glsen.org
3. According to GLSEN's "2009 National School Climate Survey," nearly two-thirds of students heard homophobic remarks from school personnel.

4. See 2.
5–6. GLSEN. "The Principal's Perspective: School Safety, Bullying and Harassment," May 2008. www.glsen.org
7–12. See 2.
13. GLSEN. www.glsen.org

14–16. See 2.
17. In 2009, at least two kids—both 11 years old—took their own lives because of homophobic taunting. GLSEN. www.glsen.org
18–23. See 2.