



The issue:

YOUTH/SUICIDE

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth are **up to 4 times** more likely to attempt suicide than straight youth.



damn facts

One in 7 people who dies by suicide is a child.¹⁸

One in 3 gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender teens has attempted suicide.¹⁹

Half of gay and transgender youth have been rejected by their parents after coming out. More than 1 in 4 have been thrown out of the house.²⁰

Gay and transgender teens whose parents rejected them after coming out were up to 9 times more likely to attempt suicide than those whose parents accepted them.²¹

a project of



Don't Our Kids and Friends Deserve to Grow Up? WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUTH SUICIDE!

One in 7 people who dies by suicide is a child¹—and suicide is the third leading cause of death for young people aged 10 to 24.²

But gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth are at far greater risk than the average adolescent: They are up to 4 times more likely to attempt suicide than their straight peers.³ More than 2 in 5 think about suicide often,⁴ and 1 in 3 has attempted it.⁵

WHY YOUTH SUICIDE IS SO PREVALENT!

Adolescence is stressful for all youth. Unfortunately for gay and transgender youth, the stress of adolescence is compounded by other factors that make them feel particularly isolated and alone:

They are far more likely to be bullied at school. Almost 90% of gay and transgender students have been verbally or physically harassed or assaulted, compared to 62% of their straight classmates.⁶ This isn't playground teasing, but harsh name-calling and insults (such as being called "faggot" or "dyke"), being shoved, kicked—even punched.

They don't always have the necessary support network. Gay and transgender teens often lack a support network that can help them get through the challenges of their lives. For example, more than one-third lost friends when they came out.⁷ Meanwhile, some teachers do little to help gay and transgender youth who are bullied. Almost a third of students who reported an incident of bullying said that school staff did nothing in response.⁸

They may experience family conflict. Clearly these youth are in greater need of support at home—yet they don't always get it. Even when they mean well, research has found that families can't necessarily provide the appropriate skills or validation that gay and transgender teens need to withstand life's hostilities.⁹

And in general, gay, lesbian and bisexual people have experienced higher levels of emotional and physical mistreatment from both their mothers and fathers during childhood compared to their straight peers.¹⁰ Half of gay and transgender youth have been rejected by their parents, and more than 1 in 4 have been thrown out of the house, after coming out.¹¹

WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT SUICIDE!

We can do a great deal to minimize the risk of suicide among gay and transgender youth. Showing acceptance and support is key, as it can decrease the sense of alienation and isolation that these youth experience.

Fewer than 1/3 of states have safe schools laws that protect on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

damn partner



www.thetrevorproject.org

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization focused on crisis and suicide prevention efforts among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth.

Create safe schools. Fewer than one-third of states have safe schools laws that protect on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.¹² But given that young people spend most of their waking hours at school, creating a safe and supportive environment at school is crucial.

At the school level, peer support groups lower the amount of homophobic remarks and harassment in the halls and increase students' sense of being a part of their school community.¹³ And, youth who could identify at least one supportive teacher at their school were less likely to miss school, maintained higher grade point averages and reported higher educational goals than those who couldn't.¹⁴ These youth are also far less likely than those without a supportive staff member to report suicide attempts in the previous year or being threatened with a weapon.¹⁵

Be accepting at home. A little affection goes a long way. Youth whose parents accepted their sexual orientation or gender identity enjoyed greater overall health;

possessed higher self-esteem; and were much less likely to be depressed, use illegal drugs or think about or attempt suicide.¹⁶ By contrast, those who were rejected by their parents and family members were up to nine times more likely to have attempted suicide than those whose parents accepted them.¹⁷

TIME FOR THINGS TO CHANGE!

Because having any kid think consider suicide is one too many.

And because growing up should be about making friends, discovering the world and discovering yourself—not about finding a way to end your pain and end your life.

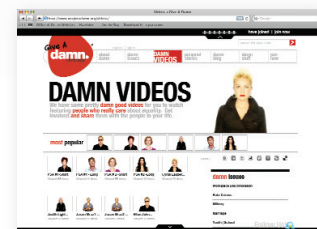
We all have to get involved.
We all have to give a damn.

WE GIVE A DAMN. DO YOU?

I GIVE A DAMN ABOUT YOUTH SUICIDE! 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 Trevor Project: www.thetrevorproject.org

www.wegiveadamn.org



1–2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). www.cdc.gov

3–5 The Trevor Project. "Research and Academic Messaging Guide," 2009. www.thetrevorproject.org

6 Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). "From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in America," October 2005. www.glsen.org

7 See 3–5.

8 GLSEN. "2007 National School Climate Survey," October 2008. www.glsen.org

9–11 See 3–5.

12 The Trevor Project. www.thetrevorproject.org

13–14 See 8.

15 See 3–5.

16–17 Family Acceptance Project. "Supportive Families, Healthy Children, Helping Families with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Children," 2009.

18 See 1–2.

19–20 See 3–5.

21 See 16–17.