

BULLYING AND LGBTQ+ YOUTH



Background

- **Homophobia...**
 - Includes negative attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors toward non-heterosexual individuals¹
 - Can include verbal, physical, and relational aggression that contains homophobic theses or references¹
- **Transphobia...**
 - Is the fear, hatred, disbelief, or mistrust of people who are transgender, thought to be transgender, or whose gender expression does not conform to traditional gender roles²
 - May include negative attitudes or beliefs, aversion and prejudice, irrational fear and misunderstanding, discounting pronouns²
- LGBTQ+ youth experience disproportionate rates of bullying compared to their heterosexual peers³
- Over 50% of LGBTQ+ students who were harassed or assaulted in school did not report the incident to staff, and of those who did, 46% reported that school staff did nothing in response⁴

The Experiences of LGBTQ+ Youth at School

- According to a 2017 survey, 33% of LGBTQ+ students report being bullied on school property, while 23.1% of these students report being cyberbullied within the past year⁴
- Over 50% of teachers observe that only “a few” other teachers intervene when students are using homophobic language, with nearly 60% of teachers reporting having heard a fellow teacher using homophobic language⁵
- In one study, only 5% of teachers have *never* heard a fellow teacher use homophobic language⁵

Recommendations

A supportive school climate may involve the following:

- Having a point person for LGBTQ+ student issues
- Displaying sexual orientation-specific content
- Having a gay-straight alliance
- Discussing bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity
- Providing professional development around LGBTQ+ inclusion and LGBTQ+ student issues

Resources for More Information

The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN):

- glsen.org

LGBT National Help Center

- glbthotline.org

GLAAD

- glaad.org/resources/ally/6

Stopbullying.gov

- stopbullying.gov/bullying/lgbtq

Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)

- pflag.org

The Trevor Project

- thetrevorproject.org

REFERENCES

[1] Poteat, V.P. (2008). Contextual and moderating effects of the peer group climate on use of homophobic epithets. *School Psychology Review*, 37, 188-201.

[2] Trans and gender nonconforming identities (n.d.). Planned Parenthood. <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/gender-identity/transgender/whats-transphobia>

[3] Gower, A. L., Forster, M., Gloppen, K., Johnson, A. Z., Eisenberg, M. E., Connett, J. E., & Borowsky, I. W. (2018). School practices for foster LGBT-supportive climate: Associations with adolescent bullying involvement. *Prevention Science*, 19, 813-821.

[4] Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Zongrone, A., Clark, C., & Truong, H. (2018). *The 2017 national school climate survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth in our nation's schools*. Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network. <https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/GLSEN-2017-National-School-Climate-Survey-NSCS-Full-Report.pdf>

[5] Wright, T. E., & Smith, N. (2013). Bullying of LGBT youth and school climate for LGBT educators. *Gender, Education, Music, & Society*, 6(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.5561/5010>

Hotlines



- **National Suicide Prevention Helpline:** 1-800-237-TALK
- **GLBT National Youth Talkline:** 1-800-246-PRIDE
- **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender National Hotline:** 1-888-THE-GLNH
- **Peer Listening Line for LGBT Youth:** 1-800-399-PEER
- **GLBT Hate Crimes Hotline:** 1-800-686-HATE
- **LYRIC Youth Talkline:** 1-800-246-7743
- **National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) Legal Helpline:** 1-800-528-6257