

FACTS AND FIGURES ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY ISSUES IN SCHOOLS




the problem

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT ARE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN ILLINOIS SCHOOLS¹

- ➔ 35% of Illinois students report that sexual orientation is the most common reason students are bullied or harassed
- ➔ 34% of Illinois students report that gender identity is the most common reason students are bullied or harassed

HOMOPHOBIC LANGUAGE IS PERVASIVE IN ILLINOIS SCHOOLS¹

- ➔ 74% of Illinois students report hearing homophobic remarks such as “faggot” or “dyke” from other students in school
- ➔ 83% of Illinois students report hearing homophobic remarks such as “that’s so gay” from other students in school

ILLINOIS TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF DO NOT INTERVENE TO STOP HOMOPHOBIC LANGUAGE¹

- ➔ 48% of Illinois students report that teachers and school staff rarely intervene when they hear homophobic language

HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING AND HARASSMENT AFFECTS EVERYONE²

- ➔ For each LGBT student who reports being bullied or harassed, 4 straight students report being harassed or bullied for being perceived as gay or lesbian

the solutions

SCHOOL POLICIES INCLUSIVE OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY¹

- ➔ The frequency of homophobic remarks and harassment about nontraditional gender expression is greater at schools without comprehensive anti-harassment policies

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY⁵

- ➔ Training teachers on issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity is the single most effective strategy for creating a safer school climate

GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCES (GSAS)¹

- ➔ Students in schools with GSAs or similarly supportive clubs report that teachers and school staff intervene more often to stop homophobic language than students in schools without such clubs

the consequences

MISSING SCHOOL AS A RESULT OF FEELING UNSAFE³

- ➔ LGBT students are three times more likely than their heterosexual peers to miss school because they feel unsafe

FIGHTING THAT REQUIRES MEDICAL ATTENTION³

- ➔ LGBT students are nearly four times more likely than their heterosexual peers to be in a physical fight that requires medical attention

DEPRESSION³

- ➔ LGBT students are nearly twice as likely as their heterosexual peers to suffer from depression

ATTEMPTING SUICIDE³

- ➔ LGBT students are nearly three times more likely than their heterosexual peers to attempt suicide

UNCHECKED BULLYING LEADS TO MORE VIOLENCE⁴

- ➔ 60% of boys classified as bullies in grades 6–9 were convicted of at least one crime by age 24 and 40% of them had three or more convictions

¹GLSEN, 2006, *From Teasing to Torment: A Report on School Climate in Illinois* ²National Mental Health Association, 2002 ³The Centers for Disease Control and the Chicago Public Schools Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2003 ⁴Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, September 2003 ⁵Szalacha, American Journal of Education

