

# What Research Says About Bullying & LGBT Teens

## Effects of Hostile School Climate

### Because of their sexual orientation, LGBT students reported:

- 82% were verbally harassed
- 38% were physically harassed
- 18% were physically assaulted at school in the past year
- 64% felt unsafe at school

### Among LGBT high school students:

- 80% of transgender students reported feeling unsafe at school
- 44% felt unsafe--esp. in locker rooms, bathrooms & PE/Gym classes
- 85% of LGBT students heard "gay" used in a negative way
- 71% heard homophobic remarks frequently or often at school
- 30% of LGBT students skipped a class or missed at least an entire day of school in the past month because of safety concerns
- 60% of LGBT students have never reported being harassed

### Documented effects of a hostile school environment:

- Victims of harassment/bullying have higher levels of depression and anxiety, lower levels of self-esteem, lower grade point averages, higher levels of drug and alcohol abuse, higher levels of suicide

## Effects of Positive Interventions and Support

### Having a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) in school was related to:

- Hearing fewer homophobic remarks and less victimization
- Less likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation
- Having a greater sense of belonging to their school community

### In schools with a curriculum that affirmed LGBT people & history:

- Fewer homophobic remarks, and teens were less likely to feel unsafe
- LGBT teens reported that their peers were accepting of them
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### Presence of staff supportive to LGBT students was related to:

- Higher grade point averages
- Lower likelihood of missing school and feeling unsafe at school
- Greater likelihood of pursuing higher education

### In schools with a bully prevention policy that mentions LGBT:

- Student heard fewer homophobic remarks, experienced lower levels of victimization, reported that staff intervened, and were more likely to report incidents of harassment and assault to school staff

### Changes in school climate for LGBT youth over time:

- Far fewer homophobic remarks; significant decrease in harassment and assault; small increase in schools with a Gay-Straight Alliance; significant increase in LGBT-related topics in school curriculum