

# GET THE FACTS: Realities of LGBT Students and Strategies to Create Safer Schools for All

Students are our future. However, for many LGBT students, their educational environments are unsafe and not affirming of their true selves. Students who are someone's brother, sister, cousin, niece, nephew, son or daughter deserve an environment where they are allowed to thrive and have the brightest future possible.

Below are findings from GLSEN's 2015 survey. Notice not only the negative impacts of hostile school climates, but the benefits associated with Supportive Educators, Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), Comprehensive Policies and LGBT-Inclusive curriculums. Learn the facts and help us create a world where every student has a chance to live with pride.

**FACT:** School is often a hostile place for LGBT students: 7 out of 10 LGBT students are harassed at school for who they are.

## BECAUSE OF THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION

**1 in 5**

Students were Physically Assaulted  
e.g., punched, kicked, injured with a weapon  
(16.5%)

**2 in 5**

Students were Physically Harassed  
e.g., pushed or shoved  
(36.2%)

**3 in 4**

Students were Verbally Harassed  
e.g., called names or threatened  
(74.1%)

## BECAUSE OF THEIR GENDER EXPRESSION

**1 in 8**

Students were Physically Assaulted  
e.g., punched, kicked, injured with a weapon  
(11.4%)

**1 in 4**

Students were Physically Harassed  
e.g., pushed or shoved  
(22.7%)

**1 in 2**

Students were Verbally Harassed  
e.g., called names or threatened  
(55.2%)

"He was calling me 'Latino lesbian' because...I stand out. There's not a lot of gay people in my school and there's not a lot of Hispanic people in my school, so he took the two things that I stand out as and put them into one and he was using it as if it were funny. And I am Latina and I am a lesbian, but when you say it offensively or as if that's a bad thing, it bothers me because it's not supposed to be an offensive thing. It's who I am."

— Ximena, 9th grade

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## FACT:

Harassment and victimization can negatively impact students' well-being and academic achievement.



## FACT:

You can improve the experiences of LGBT students in schools!

### Ensure schools are implementing an inclusive curriculums,

where LGBT students are validated by seeing themselves reflected in classroom lessons and assignments and all students learn to respect and accept all people.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Less than 20% of LGBT students reported having inclusive curriculums, textbooks and classroom assignments

### Be a visible and supportive ally to LGBT youth

by listening, affirming, protecting and empowering students to live to their potential.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Students need supportive community members and school staff! Those with greater numbers of supportive staff reported better school experiences and were less likely to be absent because they felt unsafe.

### Make sure your school district has comprehensive and enumerated policies

so all students have safe and affirming learning environments.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Policies that specifically enumerate sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, along with other protected categories, are most effective at improving the experiences of LGBT students.

### Support a school's Gay-Straight Alliance

where students have safe spaces to find friends and allies and build leadership skills.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

GSAs are critical support systems for LGBT students and can create a safer and more welcoming school environment. However, less than half of LGBT students report having a GSA or similar club at their school.

To view the full *2013 National School Climate Survey* report visit [glsen.org/nscs](http://glsen.org/nscs)