



10 Reasons Why Schools Benefit from Gay Straight Alliances

- 1. Improved attendance rates**
31.8% of LGBTQ students miss at least one day of school a month because they feel unsafe and uncomfortable. In schools with GSAs this number is reduced to 19%. (GLSEN, 2011)
- 2. Improved graduation rates**
28% of LGBTQ students will drop out of school due to harassment and feeling unsafe, three times the general population. In schools with GSAs this number is reduced. (GLSEN, 2011)
- 3. More students go on to post-secondary education**
LGBTQ students who are not able to identify supportive staff are more than twice as likely not to plan to continue their education after high school. In schools with GSAs this number is reduced. (GLSEN, 2011)
- 4. Higher school GPA**
LGBTQ students who were harassed because of their sexual orientation or gender expression had GPAs almost half a grade lower than students who were not harassed over their perceived sexual orientation. In schools with GSAs student attendance improves, students report feeling more connected to school, and they earn higher grades. (GLSEN, 2011)
- 5. Improved school culture and climate**
LGBTQ students report hearing homophobic remarks 84.9% of the time in school (that number increases to 90% for transgender students) and 55.9% of the time from staff. Students in schools with GSAs report hearing fewer homophobic remarks including expressions where “gay” is used in a negative way. (GLSEN, 2011)
- 6. Increased teacher involvement in bullying and harassment interventions**
Teachers fail to respond to homophobic name calling 84% of the time. In schools with GSAs, students report that personnel intervene when they hear homophobic remarks at higher rates than schools without GSAs. (19.8% vs. 12.0%, GLSEN, 2011).
- 7. Improved safety for more than 1 in 10 students**
63.5% of LGBTQ student report feeling unsafe in their schools. That number increases to 82% for transgender students. In schools with GSAs this number is reduced (unsafe-70.6% non-GSA schools; 54.3% GSA schools). Almost one in five (18.3%,) LGBTQ students are physically assaulted or injured with a weapon at school. (56% of our transgender youth). In schools with GSAs this number is reduced, as are other incidents of victimization. (38.5% victimization without GSAs, 23.0% victimization with GSAs). (GLSEN, 2011).
- 8. Makes the school more welcoming for all parents**
There are several million gay dads and lesbian moms in the US. GSAs send messages that your school welcomes all parents.
- 9. Helps prevent youth suicide**
LGBTQ students have 3-5 times the suicide rate of heterosexual teens. Fifty-one percent of transgender students who were verbally harassed, physically or sexually assaulted, or expelled because they were transgender or gender non-conforming reported having attempted suicide. Of those who were physically assaulted, 64% attempted suicide, and of those who were sexually assaulted 68% attempted suicide. Of those who had to leave school because of harassment, 68% reported having attempted suicide. In schools with GSAs, students report lower risk for suicide attempts. (Suicide Prevention Resource Center, 2008; National Transgender Discrimination Study, 2010).
- 10. What could a GSA do in YOUR school?**