Bullying of young people in schools has become a major concern in America. Its prevalence is pervasive (for example, up to 32% of all youth between 12 and 18 years of age report having been victimized), and it has a strong impact on a student’s well-being, social functioning, and academic achievement. Bullying contributes to increased risks for suicide, depression, high-risk sexual behavior, and substance use, among other negative health outcomes. Sexual minority youth, or those youth who are perceived as such, are disproportionately subjected to bullying relative to their heterosexual counterparts. Over the past 20 years, progress has been made through state laws prohibiting bullying and implementation of innovative programs within schools and classrooms to reduce harassment and improve the safety of LGBT (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender) youth. However, to accelerate the decline of this problem and its resulting disparities, additional comprehensive efforts must be made. APHA sets forth a series of recommendations that can be used to advance policies promoting safety and providing sufficient recourse for victims. Most important, these recommendations advocate for comprehensive health education, sex education, and sexual health programs that will address the problem upstream by influencing children's beliefs and behaviors at a very early age.

This article explores the severe bullying of LGBTQ students from a comparative international human rights perspective. Modern international refugee law, in existence since 1951 and accepted by 146 countries, provides a useful framework for evaluating the seriousness of the harm experienced by bullied LGBTQ youth in the United States. Applying international refugee law, this Article assesses whether the failure of U.S. schools and governments to protect children who are victims of physical and psychological bullying on account of their actual or perceived sexual orientation constitutes a violation of human rights such that were such students to seek asylum in another country they would likely qualify. In order to make this determination, the article assesses whether bullied LGBTQ students in the United States suffer harm severe enough to constitute persecution; whether the persecution occurs on account of the students' membership in the particular social group of “transgender students and students with actual or perceived lesbian, gay or bisexual sexual orientation”; whether the federal government has refused to provide protection to such students by failing to pass legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, or legislation specifically aimed at protecting LGBTQ students from violence and other forms of severe bullying in schools; and whether individual state and local governments have allowed the persecution of LGBTQ students to proliferate by curtailling, refusing to enforce, or refusing to implement policies aimed at protecting them. The Article concludes with a determination of whether bullied LGBTQ youth in some U.S. locations are victims of state-sponsored or state-permitted human rights violations and provides appropriate recommendations.


Policies & Laws | StopBullying.gov


Bullying has long been tolerated as a rite of passage among children and adolescents. There is an implication that individuals who are bullied must have “asked for” this type of treatment, or deserved it. Sometimes, even the child who is bullied begins to internalize this idea. For many years, there has been a general acceptance and collective shrug when it comes to a child or adolescent with greater social capital or power pushing around a child perceived as subordinate. But bullying is not developmentally appropriate; it should not be considered a normal part of the typical social grouping that occurs throughout a child’s life.
**Meta-Analyses & Systematic Reviews**


This article reviews research on psychosocial and health outcomes associated with peer victimization related to adolescent sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Using four electronic databases and supplementary methods, we identified 39 relevant studies. These studies were published between 1995 and 2012 and conducted in 12 different countries. The studies were diverse in terms of their approaches to sampling participants, assessing participants’ sexual orientation, operationalizing peer victimization, and with regard to the psychosocial and health outcomes studied in relation to peer victimization. Despite the methodological diversity across studies, there is fairly strong evidence that peer victimization related to sexual orientation and gender identity or expression is associated with a diminished sense of school belonging and higher levels of depressive symptoms; findings regarding the relationship between peer victimization and suicidality have been more mixed. Peer victimization related to sexual orientation and gender identity or expression is also associated with disruptions in educational trajectories, traumatic stress, and alcohol and substance use. Recommendations for future research and interventions are discussed.

Bullying is a social phenomenon. About 30% of school children are involved in bullying as victims, bullies, or bully/victims. The victims of bullying suffer multiple negative consequences, including poor social and academic adjustment, depression, and anxiety. This paper extends Farrington and Ttofi’s (2009) meta-analysis of controlled trials of 44 bullying interventions, which suggests that bullying programs are effective in decreasing bullying and victimization. We review controlled trials of bullying interventions published from June, 2009 through April, 2013, focusing on substantive results across 32 studies that examined 24 bullying interventions. Of the 32 articles, 17 assess both bullying and victimization, 10 assess victimization only, and 5 assess bullying only. Of the 22 studies examining bullying perpetration, 11 (50%) observed significant effects; of the 27 studies examining bullying victimization, 18 (67%) reported significant effects. Although the overall findings are mixed, the data suggest that interventions implemented outside of the United States with homogeneous samples are more successful than programs implemented in the United States, where samples tend to be more heterogeneous. Few studies have measured bullying with sufficient precision to have construct validity. Finding strong measures to assess the complex construct of bullying remains a major challenge for the field.

This study is a comprehensive, quantitative synthesis of the literature examining the effects of homophobic bullying on both sexual-minority and heterosexual youths’ psychological outcomes. The final analysis included 16 published and 2 unpublished studies from around the world, totaling 81 effect sizes. Various study characteristics were coded to assess moderator effects, but only age of youth was found to play a significant role between bullying and detrimental outcomes for youths. Results demonstrated that sexual-minority youths experience significantly more bullying and victimization than do heterosexual peers and that these hostile experiences contribute to a number of negative outcomes for sexual-minority youths.

Bullying and peer victimization in school are serious concerns for students, parents, teachers, and school officials in the U.S. and around the world. This article reviews risk factors associated with bullying and peer victimization in school within the context of Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework. This review integrates empirical findings on the risk factors associated with bullying and peer victimization within the context of micro- (parent–youth relationships, inter-parental violence, relations with peers, school connectedness, and school environment), meso- (teacher involvement), exo- (exposure to media violence, neighborhood environment), macro- (cultural norms and beliefs, religious affiliation), and chronosystem (changes in family structure) levels. Theories that explain the relationships between the risk factors and bullying behavior are also included. We then discuss the efficacy of the current bullying prevention and intervention programs, which is followed by directions for future research.

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This meta-analysis quantitatively compiled the results of studies from 1992 to 2009 to determine the prevalence and types of victimization experienced by lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals. Based on the results of three searches, 386 studies were retrieved and coded. Comparisons were made across all LGB individuals (138 studies), between LGB and heterosexual individuals (65 studies), and between LGB females and males (53 studies), with over 500,000 participants. Multiple types of victimization were coded, including discrimination, physical assault, and school victimization. Findings revealed that for LGB individuals, reports of victimization experiences were substantial (e.g., 55% experienced verbal harassment, and 41% experienced discrimination) and some types have increased since a 1992 review, while others have decreased. LGB individuals experienced greater rates of victimization than heterosexual individuals (range: d = .04 – .58). LGB males experienced some types of victimization more than LGB females (e.g., weapon assault and being robbed) but, overall, the gender differences were small. It can be concluded that LGB individuals still experience a substantial amount of victimization. Implications for research methods are discussed, including recommendations for sampling and measurement of victimization.

Although the Internet has transformed the way our world operates, it has also served as a venue for cyberbullying, a serious form of misbehavior among youth. With many of today’s youth experiencing acts of cyberbullying, a growing body of literature has begun to document the prevalence, predictors, and outcomes of this behavior, but the literature is highly fragmented and lacks theoretical focus. Therefore, our purpose in the present article is to provide a critical review of the existing cyberbullying research. The general aggression model is proposed as a useful theoretical framework from which to understand this phenomenon. Additionally, results from a meta-analytic review are presented to highlight the size of the relationships between cyberbullying and traditional bullying, as well as relationships between cyberbullying and other meaningful behavioral and psychological variables. Mixed effects meta-analysis results indicate that among the strongest associations with cyberbullying perpetration were normative beliefs about aggression and moral disengagement, and the strongest associations with cyberbullying victimization were stress and suicidal ideation. Several methodological and sample characteristics served as moderators of these relationships. Limitations of the meta-analysis include issues dealing with causality or directionality of these associations as well as generalizability for those meta-analytic estimates that are based on smaller sets of studies (k < 5). Finally, the present results uncover important areas for future research. We provide a relevant agenda, including the need for understanding the incremental impact of cyberbullying (over and above traditional bullying) on key behavioral and psychological outcomes.

Gay-straight alliances (GSAs) are school-based organizations for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) youth and their allies that often attempt to improve school climate for sexual and gender minority youth. This meta-analysis evaluates the association between school GSA presence and youth’s self-reports of school-based victimization by quantitatively synthesizing 15 primary studies with 62,923 participants. Findings indicate GSA presence is associated with significantly lower levels of youth’s self-reports of homophobic victimization, fear for safety, and hearing homophobic remarks, and these results are robust, controlling for a variety of study-level factors. The findings of this meta-analysis provide evidence to support GSAs as a means of protecting LGBTQ+ youth from school-based victimization.

Bullying is a significant problem in schools and measuring this concept remains problematic. The purposes of this study were to (1) identify the published self-report measures developed to assess youth bullying; (2) evaluate their psychometric properties and instrument characteristics; and (3) evaluate the quality of identified psychometric papers evaluating youth bullying measures. Evidence supporting the psychometric soundness of the instruments identified was limited. Many measures were in early development and additional evaluation is necessary to validate their psychometric properties. A pool of instruments possesses acceptable initial psychometric dependability for selected assessment purposes. These findings have significant implications for assessing youth bullying and designing and evaluating school-based interventions.
Bullying has emerged as a behavior with deleterious effects on youth; however, prevalence estimates vary based on measurement strategies employed. We conducted a systematic review and content analysis of bullying measurement strategies to gain a better understanding of each strategy including behavioral content. Multiple online databases (i.e., PsychInfo, MedLine, ERIC) were searched to identify measurement strategies published between 1985 and 2012. Included measurement strategies assessed bullying behaviors, were administered to respondents with ages of 12 to 20, were administered in English, and included psychometric data. Each publication was coded independently by two study team members with a pre-set data extraction form, who subsequently met to discuss discrepancies. Forty-one measures were included in the review. A majority used differing terminology; student self-report as primary reporting method; and included verbal forms of bullying in item content. Eleven measures included a definition of bullying, and 13 used the term “bullying” in the measure. Very few definitions or measures captured components of bullying such as repetition, power imbalance, aggression, and intent to harm. Findings demonstrate general inconsistency in measurement strategies on a range of issues, thus, making comparing prevalence rates between measures difficult.

Highly visible tragedies in high schools thought to involve bullying have directly contributed to public support for state-mandated K-12 anti-bullying programming. But are existing programs actually effective for these older adolescents? This paper first outlines theoretical considerations, including developmental changes in (a) the manifestation of bullying, (b) the underlying causes of bullying, and (c) the efficacy of domain-general behavior-change tactics. This review leads to the prediction of a discontinuity in program efficacy among older adolescents. The paper then reports a novel meta-analysis of studies that administered the same program to multiple age groups and measured levels of bullying (k = 19, with 72 effect sizes). By conducting a hierarchical meta-analysis of the within-study moderation of efficacy by age, more precise estimates of age-related trends were possible. Results were consistent with theory in that whereas bullying appears to be effectively prevented in 7th grade and below, in 8th grade and beyond there is a sharp drop to an average of zero. This finding contradicts past meta-analyses that used between-study tests of moderation. This paper provides a basis for a theory of age-related moderation of program effects that may generalize to other domains. The findings also suggest the more general need for caution when interpreting between-study meta-analytic moderation results.

While consensus has grown about the prevalence of negative Black media images, measuring the influence of these images and youth rejection or endorsement of these images on Black youth well-being and identity is a new and understudied phenomenon. This study was designed to create a measure of Black media stereotypes for use with adolescents. Focus groups with Black youth ages 14 to 21 were conducted and the data were used to design the Black Media Messages Questionnaire (BMMQ). One hundred thirteen Black youth completed the BMMQ along with measures of racial socialization, racial identity, Black history knowledge, body image, and self-esteem. Confirmatory factor analysis of the BMMQ resulted in three scales with six factors. The factors were entered into correlation and ANOVA analyses. Age, gender, and TV viewing consistently correlated with BMMQ factors. ANOVA results demonstrated that few variables were significant for the positive stereotype BMMQ factors, but endorsement of negative Black stereotype media messages resulted in significant age and gender differences. Analyses also revealed expected relationships among BMMQ, racial socialization, racial identity, and Black history knowledge variables.
The current study examined characteristics of bullying involvement and social connectedness in relation to suicide ideation and attempts in a sample of youth who report bullying victimization, bullying perpetration, and/or low social connectedness. The sample was comprised of 321 youth (67% female), ages 12–15 years (M = 13.6), recruited from an emergency department in the Midwest region of the United States. Results indicated that lower levels of social connectedness and higher levels of bullying victimization and perpetration were significantly associated with suicide ideation and attempts. Level of social connectedness did not moderate the relationship between bullying involvement and suicide risk. The associations between the severity of subtypes of bullying victimization and perpetration (verbal, relational, physical), electronic bullying involvement, and suicide risk were examined. Results highlight a continuum in severity of bullying involvement and social connectedness associated with suicide risk. Implications of these results are discussed.

To examine the relationship between sexual orientation and past-year reports of bullying victimization and perpetration in a large sample of American youth. Survey data from 7,559 adolescents aged 14–22 who responded to the 2001 wave questionnaire of the Growing Up Today Study were examined cross-sectionally. Multivariable generalized estimating equations regression was performed using the modified Poisson method. We examined associations between sexual orientation and past-year bullying victimization and perpetration with heterosexuals as the referent group, stratifying by gender and controlling for age, race/ethnicity, and weight status. There are significant differences in reports of bullying victimization and perpetration between heterosexual and sexual minority youth. Clinicians should inquire about sexual orientation and bullying, and coordinate care for youth who may need additional support.

Social network analysis and multilevel modeling were used to examine the formation of homophobic name-calling behavior in adolescents. Specifically, peer group contextual and socialization effects on homophobic name-calling as well as the influence of masculinity attitudes, general bullying perpetration, and victimization were tested. Participants included 493 fifth- through eighth-grade students from two middle schools. Results indicated that peer groups play an important role in the formation of homophobic name-calling. Additionally, students who were victims of homophobic name-calling over time increased their own perpetration of homophobic name-calling. Non-homophobic bullying was also related to homophobic name-calling, but only for male peer groups. And finally, the role of masculinity attitudes was shown to be complex, as peer group masculinity attitudes were significantly predictive of an individual's homophobic perpetration; however, this effect did not remain significant over time. Results suggest that homophobic name-calling during early adolescence is strongly influenced by peers and rooted in gender and masculinity.

The mental health and victimization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth have garnered media attention with the "It Gets Better Project." Despite this popular interest, there is an absence of empirical evidence evaluating a possible developmental trajectory in LGBTQ distress and the factors that might influence distress over time. This study used an accelerated longitudinal design and multilevel modeling to examine a racially/ethnically diverse sample of 231 LGBTQ adolescents aged 16–20 years at baseline, across six time points, and over 3.5 years. Results indicated that both psychological distress and victimization decreased across adolescence and into early adulthood. Furthermore, time-lagged analyses and mediation analyses suggested that distress was related to prior experiences of victimization, with greater victimization leading to greater distress. Support received from parents, peers, and significant others was negatively correlated with psychological distress in the cross-sectional model but did not reach significance in the time-lagged model. Analyses suggest that psychological distress might "get better" when adolescents encounter less victimization and adds to a growing literature indicating that early experiences of stress impact the mental health of LGBTQ youth.

Being a victim of bullying is associated with greater risk of youth substance use; however, research specifically examining whether tobacco use behaviors differ among adolescents who were bullied at school only, electronically only, or both at school and electronically is limited. Girls who were bullied both at school and electronically reported the highest odds of all tobacco use behaviors (ever use of cigarettes, current use of cigarettes, and current use of any tobacco product) as compared with girls who were not bullied after adjusting for covariates. Conversely, for boys, only the association between being bullied electronically only and ever use of cigarettes remained significant after adjusting for covariates. Results from this study indicate that electronic bullying may differentially influence the odds of tobacco use in high school students as compared with bullying that occurs at school only. Confirmation of these findings could inform interventions to reduce both bullying and tobacco use in high school.


The nationwide effort to reduce bullying in U.S. schools can be regarded as part of larger civil and human rights movements that have provided children with many of the rights afforded to adult citizens, including protection from harm in the workplace. Many bullied children find that their schools are hostile environments, but civil rights protections against harassment apply only to children who fall into protected classes, such as racial and ethnic minorities, students with disabilities, and victims of gender harassment or religious discrimination. This article identifies the conceptual challenges that bullying poses for legal and policy efforts, reviews judicial and legislative efforts to reduce bullying, and makes some recommendations for school policy. Recognition that all children have a right to public education would be one avenue for broadening protection against bullying to all children.


Homophobic bullying is a pervasive issue in U.S. schools. Broadly, two distinct approaches to address bullying include punitive versus supportive practices. Few studies have considered these approaches in the context of school connectedness in relation to homophobic bullying. Drawing from theories of social support and control, we argue that supportive practices should reduce homophobic bullying and promote school connectedness. Further, although punitive practices may deter homophobic bullying, they also compromise school connectedness, except perhaps among students who have been bullied. Supportive practices could be especially important for promoting school connectedness for students who experience homophobic bullying. Using teacher ($n = 62,448$) and student ($n = 337,945$) data from 745 high schools that participated in the California School Climate Survey and the California Healthy Kids Survey, our study examines the association between teacher reports of punitive versus supportive practices, and student experiences of homophobic bullying and school connectedness. We also interrogate differential effects of punitive and supportive practices on school connectedness for students who have and have not experienced homophobic bullying. Results indicate that supportive, but not punitive, practices are associated with less homophobic bullying and higher school connectedness. Supportive practices also serve as a protective factor for students who have experienced homophobic bullying. Additionally, students in schools with less supportive practices, and who have not experienced homophobic bullying, report lower levels of school connectedness comparable with students who have been bullied. Implications for school policy related to supporting students at risk for being bullied and school disconnectedness are discussed.
Experiencing bullying as a victim is associated with negative health and health behavior outcomes, including substance use, among adolescents. However, understandings of protective factors - factors that enhance adolescents’ resilience to the negative consequences of bullying - remain limited. The current study investigates whether teacher involvement protects adolescents from the association between being bullied due to race and smoking initiation. Students were recruited from 12 Kindergarten through 8th grade schools in an urban school district in the Northeast United States. The analytic sample included 769 students who responded to surveys in 5th or 6th grade (2009), and two years later in 7th or 8th grade (2011). Students primarily identified as Latino and/or Black, and 90% were eligible for free or reduced lunch. Fifty-four (7%) students initiated smoking between survey time points. Among students reporting lower teacher involvement, race-based bullying was associated with higher likelihood of smoking initiation (OR = 1.69, p = .03). In contrast, among students reporting higher teacher involvement, race-based bullying was not associated with higher likelihood of smoking initiation (OR = 0.95, p = .81). Results suggest that teacher involvement may protect students from the association between race-based bullying and smoking initiation. Enhancing teacher involvement among students experiencing race-based bullying in schools may limit smoking initiation.

Research demonstrates that young people involved in bullying are at greater risk for poor emotional health outcomes, but this association may not be consistent for youth of different sexual orientations. Understanding the unique needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning (LGBQ) youth may suggest important opportunities for intervention and prevention. This study, therefore, examines whether involvement with bullying is differentially associated with emotional well-being across sexual orientation. Survey data were collected from a large statewide sample of 9th and 11th grade students in 2013 (N = 79,039, 49.8% female, 74.6% white). Logistic regression tested associations between sexual orientation, physical or relational bullying perpetration and five measures of emotional health. In the full sample, those reporting bullying perpetration had significantly elevated odds of emotional health problems. However, interaction terms and stratified models indicated that in nine out of ten physical bullying models and two out of ten relational bullying models, perpetration was not as strongly associated with poor emotional health among LGBQ adolescents as it was among heterosexual youth. Possible explanations for this finding include unhealthy coping strategies or masking one’s own vulnerable status as LGBQ. Continued efforts to prevent bullying are needed for all youth.

Research focused on sexual orientation and gender identity among youth is scarce in school psychology journals. Graybill and Proctor (2016; this issue) found that across a sample of eight school support person nel journals only 3 to 3.0% of the articles since 2000 included lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) -related research. It appears that special issues are a mechanism for publishing LGBT-related scholarship. This commentary includes a call for more research in school psychology and other related disciplines that intentionally address the experiences of LGBT youth and their families. Two articles in this special section are summarized and critiqued with clear directions for future research. Researchers and practitioners are ethically responsible for engaging in social justice oriented research and that includes assessing gender identity and sexual orientation in their studies and prevention program evaluations.

Bronfenbrenner’s (1977) classic ecological theory is used as a framework to review the documented risk and protective factors associated with involvement in school-related bullying during childhood and adolescence. Microsystems such as peers (socialization during adolescence), family (violence, lack of parental monitoring), community (exposure to violence), and schools (teacher attitudes, climate) contribute to the rates of bullying perpetrated or experienced by youth. The interaction between components of the microsystem is referred to as the mesosystem, and offers insight into how contexts can exacerbate or buffer experiences for youth who are involved in bullying (e.g., family support can buffer impact of peer victimization). Recommendations are provided for teachers and other adults who work with youth.


Existing scholarship suggests that classroom practices, teacher attitudes, and the broader school environment play a critical role in understanding the rates of student reports of aggression, bullying, and victimization as well as correlated behaviors. A more accurate understanding of the nature, origins, maintenance, and prevalence of bullying and other aggressive behavior requires consideration of the broader social ecology of the school community. However, studies to date have predominantly been cross-sectional in nature, or have failed to reflect the social-ecological framework in their measurement or analytic approach. Thus, there have been limited efforts to parse out the relative contribution of student, classroom, and organizational-level factors. This special topic section emphasizes a departure from a focus on student attitudes and behaviors, to a social-contextual approach that appreciates how much features of the school environment can mitigate or perpetuate aggression. This collection of articles reflects innovative and rigorous approaches to further our understanding of climate, and has implications for theory, measurement, prevention, and practice. These studies highlight the influence of school climate on mental health, academic achievement, and problem behavior, and will hopefully stimulate interest in and further scholarship on this important topic.

We examine instances of youth cyber aggression, arguing that the close relationships of friendship and romance substantially influence the chances of being targeted. We investigate networks of friendship, dating, and aggression among a sample of 788 eighth- to twelfth-grade students in a longitudinal study of a New York school. Approximately 17 percent reported some involvement in cyber aggression within the past week. LGBTQ youth were targeted at a rate over four times that of their heterosexual peers, and females were more frequent victims than males. Rates of cyber aggression were 4.3 times higher between friends than between friends of friends. According to both an exponential random graph model and a lagged, network MRQAP regression, electronic attacks emerged far more frequently between current or former friends and dating partners, presumably due to competition, revenge, or attempts to fend off romantic rivals.

Long tolerated as a rite of passage into adulthood, bullying is now recognized as a major and preventable public health problem. The consequences of bullying—for those who are bullied, the perpetrators of bullying, and the witnesses—include poor physical health, anxiety, depression, increased risk for suicide, poor school performance, and future delinquent and aggressive behavior. Despite ongoing efforts to address bullying at the law, policy, and programmatic levels, there is still much to learn about the consequences of bullying and the effectiveness of various responses. In 2016, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine published a report entitled Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy and Practice, which examined the evidence on bullying, its impact, and responses to date.

This article focuses on the function of youth organizations for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) communities of color. LGBTQ young people (N = 29) participated in a series of focus groups, completed a brief demographic survey, and created individual community maps. The youth organization was described as providing LGBTQ youth with a home and sense of “we,” which provided support for developing a sense of authenticity, mutual engagement, conflict tolerance, and empowerment in the face of discrimination. This study documents current forms of intervention occurring within the organization, particularly in providing an identity-safe environment to promote relational health. Findings support recommendations to foster resilience and positive identity development for LGBTQ youth of color.
Discrimination is commonly experienced among adolescents. However, little is known about the intersection of multiple attributes of discrimination and bullying. We used a latent class analysis (LCA) to illustrate the intersections of discrimination attributes and bullying, and to assess the associations of LCA membership to depressive symptoms, deliberate self-harm and suicidal ideation among a sample of ethnically diverse adolescents. The data come from the 2006 Boston Youth Survey where students were asked whether they had experienced discrimination based on four attributes: race/ethnicity, immigration status, perceived sexual orientation and weight. They were also asked whether they had been bullied or assaulted for these attributes. A total of 965 (78%) students contributed to the LCA analytic sample (45% Non-Hispanic Black, 29% Hispanic, 58% Female). The LCA revealed that a 4-class solution had adequate relative and absolute fit. The 4-classes were characterized as: low discrimination (51%); racial discrimination (33%); sexual orientation discrimination (7%); racial and weight discrimination with high bullying (intersectional class) (7%). In multivariate models, compared to the low discrimination class, individuals in the sexual orientation discrimination class and the intersectional class had higher odds of engaging in deliberate self-harm. Students in the intersectional class also had higher odds of suicidal ideation. All three discrimination latent classes had significantly higher depressive symptoms compared to the low discrimination class. Multiple attributes of discrimination and bullying co-occur among adolescents. Research should consider the co-occurrence of bullying and discrimination.

The impact of societal femininity ideals on disordered eating behaviors in non-transgender women has been well described, but scant research has explored these processes among transgender women. The present study explored weight and shape control behaviors among low-income, ethnically diverse young transgender women. Soc Sci Med. Sep 2016;165:141-149.

Research into antigay violence has been limited by a lack of attention to issues of gender presentation. Understanding gender nonconformity is important for addressing antigay prejudice and hate crimes. We assessed experiences of gender-nonconformity-related prejudice among 396 Black, Latino, and White lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals recruited from diverse community venues in New York City. We assessed the prevalence and contexts of prejudice-related life events and everyday discrimination using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Gender nonconformity had precipitated major prejudice events for 9% of the respondents and discrimination instances for 19%. Women were more likely than men to report gender-nonconformity-related discrimination but there were no differences by other demographic characteristics. In analysis of events narratives, we show that gender nonconformity prejudice is often intertwined with antigay prejudice. Our results demonstrate that both constructs should be included when addressing prejudice and hate crimes targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and communities.
Many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth experience harassment and discrimination in schools and these experiences lead to increased negative social-emotional outcomes. Youth who can identify at least one supportive adult at school report better outcomes than youth who cannot identify a safe adult. Yet, many educators report feeling uncomfortable or unprepared to support LGBT youth. One reason for educators’ discomfort may be that content related to issues unique to LGBT youth is sometimes missing or covered minimally in university training programs. We hypothesized that LGBT content may be covered minimally in school support personnel journals, as well. This study analyzed eight school support personnel journals across the disciplines of school counseling, school nursing, school psychology, and school social work for LGBT content published between 2000 and 2014 to gain a better understanding of the visibility of LGBT issues in the research. Results suggested that there has been a lack of presence of LGBT issues in journals across disciplines. These results also suggest a need for an intentional focus on issues relevant to LGBT youth in school support personnel journals. Thus, the article concludes with an introduction to two articles in this special topic section, including Russell, Day, Ioverno, and Toomey's study on teacher perceptions of bullying in the context of enumerated school policies and other supportive sexual orientation and gender identity related practices and Poteat and Vecho’s (in this issue) study on characteristics of bystanders in homophobic bullying situations. The broad goal of these three studies is to increase visibility of critical LGBT issues in school support personnel journals.

The interpersonal psychological theory of suicide (IPTS) was used to examine suicidal thoughts and behaviors among 129 transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) youth. Youth were categorized according to their gender identities: female to male (FTM), male to female (MTF), female to different gender (FTDG), and male to different gender (MTDG). Higher percentages of suicidal ideation were reported by FTDG and FTM youth; higher percentages of suicide attempts were reported by FTDG and MTDG youth. Perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness were significantly related to suicidal ideation and/or suicide attempts. Experiences of painful, provocative, and harmful events and acquired capability significantly predicted suicide attempts. The findings support IPTS in explaining suicidal behaviors among TGNC youth. Implications for prevention and intervention efforts are discussed.

This article is based on findings from a qualitative study with 27 adolescents in northern British Columbia, Canada. Our aim was to explore youths’ perspectives on the sources of emotional distress in their lives and how these are connected to peer-based aggression and victimization within their community. Our analysis of narrative findings suggests that youths’ narratives about bullying reflect intersecting and socially embedded configurations of "race," neocolonialism, and place. We argue that mainstream approaches to addressing bullying as a relationship-based problem must be re-oriented to account for the role of the social or structural contexts of youths’ lives. By applying an intersectional lens, we make the case for a widening of the focus of interventions away from individual victims and perpetrators, toward a contextual approach that addresses how adolescents experience bullying as a site of health and social inequities in their community.
Bullying is the most widespread form of peer aggression in schools. In an effort to address school bullying, 49 states have passed antibullying statutes. Despite the ubiquity of these policies, there has been limited empirical examination of their effectiveness in reducing students’ risk of being bullied. To evaluate the effectiveness of antibullying legislation in reducing students’ risk of being bullied and cyberbullied, using data from 25 states in the United States. There was substantial variation in the rates of bullying and cyberbullying across states. After controlling for relevant state-level confounders, students in states with at least 1 DOE legislative component in the antibullying law had a 24% (95% CI, 15%-32%) reduced odds of reporting bullying and 20% (95% CI, 9%-29%) reduced odds of reporting cyberbullying compared with students in states whose laws had no DOE legislative components. Three individual components of antibullying legislation were consistently associated with decreased odds of exposure to both bullying and cyberbullying: statement of scope, description of prohibited behaviors, and requirements for school districts to develop and implement local policies. Antibullying policies may represent effective intervention strategies for reducing students’ risk of being bullied and cyberbullied in schools.

The goal of this study was to evaluate a novel measure of environmental risk factors for bullying among sexual minority youths. Data on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) assault hate crimes were obtained from police records, geocoded, and then linked to individual-level data on bullying and sexual orientation from the 2008 Boston Youth Survey Geospatial Dataset (N = 1,292; 108 sexual minorities). Results indicated that sexual minority youths who reported relational and electronic bullying were more likely to reside in neighborhoods with higher LGBT assault hate crime rates. There was no association between LGBT assault hate crimes and bullying among heterosexual youths, providing evidence for specificity to sexual minority youth. Moreover, no relationships were observed between sexual minority bullying and neighborhood-level violent and property crimes, indicating that the results were specific to LGBT assault hate crimes.

Bullying is found to be associated with various negative psychosocial outcomes. However, few studies have explored the association between bullying involvement and sexually-risky behaviors. Youth were recruited from three high schools, one youth church group, two community youth programs, and four public venues. Six hundred-and-thirty-eight urban African American adolescents (aged 12-22) in Chicago completed a self-report questionnaire. Major findings indicated that males were more likely than females to have sex with someone in exchange for drugs. Bullying perpetration, victimization, and perpetration/victimization were negatively associated with having sex with a condom. Older youth, and those identified as perpetrators and perpetrator-victims were more likely to have impregnated someone or been pregnant. Stress and coping framework should be considered. Bullying prevention should provide youth with several healthy coping strategies for reducing sexually-risky behaviors. Community-based and school-based violence prevention programs need to consider sexual risk outcomes associated with involvement in bullying.

Research shows that sexual minorities (e.g., lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals) experience higher levels of discrimination, stigma, and stress and are at higher risk of some poor health outcomes and health behaviors compared to their heterosexual counterparts. However, the majority of studies have examined sexual orientation disparities in a narrow range of health outcomes and behaviors using convenience samples comprised of either men or women living in restricted geographic areas. To investigate the relationship between sexual orientation identity and health among U.S. women and men, we used Poisson regression with robust variance to estimate prevalence ratios for health behaviors, outcomes, and services use among sexual minorities and heterosexual individuals using 2013 and 2014 National Health Interview Survey data (N = 69,270). Sexual minorities had a higher prevalence of some poor health behaviors and outcomes.
Recent policy introduced by the International Olympic Committee to regulate hyperandrogenism in female athletes could lead to unnecessary treatment and may be unethical.

Bullying is a pervasive problem affecting school-age children. Reviewing the latest findings on bullying perpetration and victimization, we highlight the social dominance function of bullying, the inflated self-views of bullies, and the effects of their behaviors on victims. Illuminating the plight of the victim, we review evidence on the cyclical processes between the risk factors and consequences of victimization and the mechanisms that can account for elevated emotional distress and health problems. Placing bullying in context, we consider the unique features of electronic communication that give rise to cyberbullying and the specific characteristics of schools that affect the rates and consequences of victimization. We then offer a critique of the main intervention approaches designed to reduce school bullying and its harmful effects. Finally, we discuss future directions that underscore the need to consider victimization a social stigma, conduct longitudinal research on protective factors, identify school context factors that shape the experience of victimization, and take a more nuanced approach to school-based interventions.

Bullying and being bullied have been recognized as health problems for children because of their association with adjustment problems, including poor mental health and more extreme violent behavior. It is therefore important to understand how bullying and being bullied affect the well-being and adaptive functioning of youth. We sought to use multiple data sources to better understand the psychological and social problems exhibited by bullies, victims, and bully-victims. Analysis of data from a community sample of 1985 mostly Latino and black 6th graders from 11 schools in predominantly low socioeconomic status urban communities (with a 79% response rate). Twenty-two percent of the sample was classified as involved in bullying as perpetrators (7%), victims (9%), or both (6%). Compared with other students, these groups displayed school problems and difficulties getting along with classmates. Despite increased conduct problems, bullies were psychologically strongest and enjoyed high social standing among their classmates. In contrast, victims were emotionally distressed and socially marginalized among their classmates. Bully-victims were the most troubled group, displaying the highest level of conduct, school, and peer relationship problems. To be able to intervene with bullying, it is important to recognize the unique problems of bullies, victims, and bully-victims. In addition to addressing these issues directly with their patients, pediatricians can recommend school-wide antibullying approaches that aim to change peer dynamics that support and maintain bullying.

In May 2011, more than a decade after the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) abandoned sex testing, they devised new policies in response to the IAAF's treatment of Caster Semenya, the South African runner whose sex was challenged because of her spectacular win and powerful physique that fueled an international frenzy questioning her sex and legitimacy to compete as female. These policies claim that atypically high levels of endogenous testosterone in women (caused by various medical conditions) create an unfair advantage and must be regulated. Against the backdrop of Semenya's case and the scientific and historical complexity of "gender verification" in elite sports, we question the new policies on three grounds: (1) the underlying scientific assumptions; (2) the policymaking process; and (3) the potential to achieve fairness for female athletes. We find the policies in each of these domains significantly flawed and therefore argue they should be withdrawn.
There has been increasing international attention to the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students in schools, and a growing concern regarding anti-LGBT violence and bias directed at youth as a serious human rights issue and barrier to global development goals. This special issue highlights research that has been done with and/or by nongovernmental organizations and provides a global perspective on the experiences of LGBT students. These articles provide insight into school climate for LGBT students in different country contexts but also on the efficacy of interventions on behalf of these youth (e.g., anti-bullying policies, educator professional development, awareness campaigns). Furthermore, this special issue demonstrates the multiple roles that research has played within advocacy communities working to create safer and more affirming school experiences for LGBT youth.

Bullying is often defined as repeated acts of aggression that occur over time in a relationship involving a power imbalance. Bullying of perceived sexual and gender minority youth—which can also be interpreted as homophobic bullying—is a form of aggression intended to make a young person feel marginalized or unwelcome due to their perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Research has linked bullying to various health effects similar to those experienced by survivors of traumatic stress or intimate partner violence. Few studies have examined the experiences of bullying directly from the perspectives of sexual and gender minority youth. Interviews (n=16) in this exploratory and descriptive study revealed several common themes. Those discussed are that “bullying is serious” (i.e., it was my cancer,), and “survivors use power language” describing their experiences (e.g., push through and be strong.). Youth serving professionals ought to reconsider using the term bullying and perhaps re-conceptualize this phenomenon as a form of interpersonal violence to more appropriately address it in schools.

LGBTQ youth in the child welfare system have historically received very little attention. The limited research available suggests that they encounter a number of disparities and double standards when compared to straight youth. The current study examines the role that foster family acceptance plays in the lives of LGBTQ youth as they navigate the child welfare system. The experiences of LGBTQ foster care alumni who had accepting foster family experiences are compared to those who had rejecting experiences. Findings suggest that foster family acceptance plays a pivotal role in creating an affirming and inclusive environment for LGBTQ youth. Similarly, findings provide further evidence for the need to educate, train, and recruit affirming and accepting foster families.

While the online environment may promote important developmental and social benefits, it also enables the serious and rapidly growing issue of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying constitutes an increasing public health problem—victimized children and youth experience a range of health and mental health concerns, including emotional and psychosomatic problems, maladaptive behaviors, and increased suicidality. Perpetrators demonstrate a lack of empathy, and may also struggle with health and mental health issues. This paper describes the protocols applied in a longitudinal and multi-perspective mixed-method study with five objectives: (1) to explore children/youth’s experiences, and children/youth’s, parents’, and teachers’ conceptions, definitions, and understanding of cyberbullying; (2) to explore how children/youth view the underlying motivations for cyberbullying; (3) to document the shifting prevalence rates of cyberbullying victimization, witnessing, and perpetration; (4) to identify risk and protective factors for cyberbullying involvement; and (5) to explore social, mental health, and health consequences of cyberbullying. This study will offer insight into the contemporary phenomenon of cyberbullying while also informing interventions to curb cyberbullying and address its pervasive social, mental health, and health consequences. Knowledge mobilization strategies and implications for research and practice are discussed.
Suicide has been a longstanding problem among sexual and gender minority youth in Canada. The goal of the article is to examine the link between suicidality and school climate within a theoretically informed framework and a mixed methods approach. Qualitative and quantitative findings are presented using data from more than 3,700 secondary students from the National Climate Survey of Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools (Taylor & Peter, 2011a). The findings show that even modest efforts to shift the balance of heteronormative discourse on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) students can have profound effects on the experiences and perceptions of sexual and gender minority youth, which we argue would go a long way in reducing incidents of suicidality among LGBTQ youth. In many jurisdictions across Canada, LGBTQ-inclusive policies have attempted to improve school climates and reduce the effects of homophobia and transphobia in schools. These initiatives, along with the work done by Egale Canada to create a National Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy, are important steps in addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth.

An editorial article on how to create comfort zones in conversation with teens about weight concerns, sexual health or gender identity.

Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) may promote wellbeing for sexual minority youth (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning youth) and heterosexual youth. We considered this potential benefit of GSAs in the current study by examining whether three GSA functions—support/socializing, information/resource provision, and advocacy—contributed to sense of agency among GSA members while controlling for two major covariates, family support and the broader school LGBT climate. The sample included 295 youth in 33 Massachusetts GSAs (69% LGBTQ, 68% cisgender female, 68% white; M age = 16.06 years). Based on multilevel models, as hypothesized, youth who received more support/socializing, information/resources, and did more advocacy in their GSA reported greater agency.

Support/socializing and advocacy distinctly contributed to agency even while accounting for the contribution of family support and positive LGBT school climate. Further, advocacy was associated with agency for sexual minority youth but not heterosexual youth. Greater organizational structure enhanced the association between support/socializing and agency; it also enhanced the association between advocacy and agency for sexual minority youth. These findings begin to provide empirical support for specific functions of GSAs that could promote wellbeing and suggest conditions under which their effects may be enhanced.

Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) are school-based youth settings that could promote health. Yet, GSAs have been treated as homogenous without attention to variability in how they operate or to how youth are involved in different capacities. Using a systems perspective, we considered two primary dimensions along which GSAs function to promote health: providing socializing and advocacy opportunities. Among 448 students in 48 GSAs who attended six regional conferences in Massachusetts (59.8% LGBTQ; 69.9% White; 70.1% cisgender female), we found substantial variation among GSAs and youth in levels of socializing and advocacy. GSAs were more distinct from one another on advocacy than socializing. Using multilevel modeling, we identified group and individual factors accounting for this variability. In the socializing model, youth and GSAs that did more socializing activities did more advocacy. In the advocacy model, youth who were more actively engaged in the GSA as well as GSAs whose youth collectively perceived greater school hostility and reported greater social justice efficacy did more advocacy. Findings suggest potential reasons why GSAs vary in how they function in ways ranging from internal provisions of support, to visibility raising, to collective social change. The findings are further relevant for settings supporting youth from other marginalized backgrounds and that include advocacy in their mission.
Gay-straight alliances (GSAs) may promote resilience. Yet, what GSA components predict well-being? Among 146 youth and advisors in 13 GSAs (58% lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning; 64% White; 38% received free/reduced-cost lunch), student (demographics, victimization, attendance frequency, leadership, support, control), advisor (years served, training, control), and contextual factors (overall support or advocacy, outside support for the GSA) that predicted purpose, mastery, and self-esteem were tested. In multilevel models, GSA support predicted all outcomes. Racial/ethnic minority youth reported greater well-being, yet lower support. Youth in GSAs whose advisors served longer and perceived more control and were in more supportive school contexts reported healthier outcomes. GSA advocacy also predicted purpose. Ethnographic notes elucidated complex associations and variability as to how GSAs operated.

Few studies have examined school-based factors associated with variability in the victimization and health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. Among 15,965 students in 45 Wisconsin schools, we identified differences based on Gay–Straight Alliance (GSA) presence. Youth in schools with GSAs reported less truancy, smoking, drinking, suicide attempts, and sex with casual partners than those in schools without GSAs, with this difference being more sizable for LGBTQ than heterosexual youth. GSA-based differences were greatest for sexual minority girls on reported sex while using drugs. GSA effects were nonsignificant for general or homophobic victimization, grades, and school belonging. Findings suggest that GSAs could contribute to attenuating a range of health risks, particularly for LGBTQ youth.

Weight-related bullying is prevalent among youth and associated with adverse health consequences, including increased risk for body dissatisfaction and disordered eating behaviors, which are risk factors for eating disorders. Although concerns about these problems have stimulated calls for broader intervention efforts in schools, actions thus far have been limited. This study examined educators' perspectives about potential policy actions to address these issues in schools. Educators (N = 240) completed an online questionnaire assessing their support for 11 potential school-based policy actions to address weight-related bullying and eating disorders. Participants also rated policies according to their feasibility and potential for positive impact. Forty-eight percent of participants observed weight-related bullying in their school and 99% expressed the importance of intervening in such incidents. A large majority (75%-94%) supported 8 of the 11 policies, especially actions requiring school-based health curriculum to include content on eating disorder prevention (94%), and addressing weight-bullying through antibullying policies (92%), staff training (89%), and school curriculum (89%). Strongly supported policies were viewed by participants as being the most impactful and feasible to implement. Educators recognize weight-related bullying and eating disorders as problems in their schools that warrant improved prevention and intervention efforts at the policy level.

Parental support for all policy actions was high (at least 81%) and significantly increased from 2014 to 2015 for legal measures that would a) require state anti-bullying laws to add protections against weight-based bullying, and b) enact a federal anti-bullying law that includes weight-based bullying. These findings can inform policy discourse about remedies for youth bullying, and suggest that parental support for improved legal protections against weight-based bullying is present, consistent, and strong.
LGBTQ, BULLYING & HEALTH DISPARITIES | Resource List | 01-10-17
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State anti-bullying laws have been enacted across the United States to address bullying both by and of youths. Although these statutes can provide critical protection to youth, there is debate about whether such laws should enumerate protected classes of youth. Weight-based bullying is an increasingly prevalent form of harassment and it has been overlooked in policy initiatives. Enumeration in existing laws might help protect overweight victims. As no research has examined this issue, we conducted a national survey of American adults (N=1155) to assess public opinion about enactment of anti-bullying laws that vary according to whether or not they enumerate distinguishing characteristics. Our results demonstrated substantial public agreement (ranging from 2/3 to 3/4 of participants) with enactment of state and federal anti-bullying laws that enumerate distinguishing characteristics, including physical appearance and weight, which are currently absent in most statutes. Our evidence can inform policy and legal approaches to protect youth effectively from bullying.


This article describes methodological challenges, gaps, and opportunities in US transgender health research. Transgender health research faces challenges that include standardization of lexicon, agreed upon population definitions, study design, sampling, measurement, outcome ascertainment, and sample size. Application of existing and new methods is needed to fill existing gaps, increase the scientific rigor and reach of transgender health research, and inform evidence-based prevention and care for this underserved population.


The study reports on the prevalence of mental health, substance dependence, and comorbid psychiatric disorders assessed via clinical diagnostic interview in a high-risk community-recruited sample of young transgender women. Of the 298 transgender women, 41.5% of participants had 1 or more mental health or substance dependence diagnoses; 1 in 5 (20.1%) had 2 or more comorbid psychiatric diagnoses. Prevalence of specific disorders was as follows: lifetime and current major depressive episode, 35.4% and 14.7%, respectively; suicidality, 20.2%; generalized anxiety disorder, 7.9%; posttraumatic stress disorder, 9.8%; alcohol dependence, 11.2%; and nonalcohol psychoactive substance use dependence, 15.2%. Improving access to routine primary care, diagnostic screening, psychotherapy, and pharmacologic treatments, and retention in care in clinical community-based, pediatric, and adolescent medicine settings are urgently needed to address mental health and substance dependence disorders in this population.


This study investigates depression and anxiety in gender minority (i.e., transgender and/or gender nonconforming) compared with nongender minority (cisgender) young adults. Data were from the Growing Up Today Study, a national cohort of U.S. young adults. A two-step method (maternal-reported natal sex in 1996 cross-classified with participant-reported current gender identity in 2010) was used to identify gender minority and nongender minority respondents (n = 7,831; mean age = 26 years). Differences in past week depressive symptoms and anxious symptoms were examined cross-sectionally by gender identity. Gender minority and nongender minority respondents were compared using age-adjusted logistic regression models. In gender minorities, the prevalence of depressive and anxious symptoms meeting clinical cutoffs was 52% and 38%, respectively, compared with nongender minorities (27% and 30% in females and 25% and 14% in males; p < .01). Gender identity is an understudied social determinant of mental health. Surveillance efforts to monitor mental health disparities should include survey questions to assess gender identity in epidemiologic research. Research and interventions to understand and ameliorate mental health disparities by gender identity are needed.
Bullying and substance use represent serious public health issues facing adolescents in the United States. Few large-sample national studies have examined differences in these indicators by gender identity. The Teen Health and Technology Study (N = 5,542) sampled adolescents ages 13 to 18 years old online. Weighted multivariable logistic regression models investigated disparities in substance use and tested a gender minority social stress hypothesis, comparing gender minority youth (i.e., who are transgender/gender nonconforming and have a gender different from their sex assigned at birth) and cisgender (i.e., whose gender identity or expression matches theirs assigned at birth). Overall, 11.5% of youth self-identified as gender minority. Gender minority youth had increased odds of past-12-month alcohol use, marijuana use, and nonmarijuana illicit drug use. Gender minority youth disproportionately experienced bullying and harassment in the past 12 months, and this victimization was associated with increased odds of all substance use indicators. Bullying mediated the elevated odds of substance use for gender minority youth compared to cisgender adolescents. Findings support the use of gender minority stress perspectives in designing early interventions aimed at addressing the negative health sequelae of bullying and harassment.

Childhood gender nonconformity has been associated with increased risk of caregiver abuse and bullying victimization outside the home, but it is unknown whether as a consequence children who are nonconforming are at higher risk of depressive symptoms. Using data from a large national cohort (N = 10,655), we examined differences in depressive symptoms from ages 12 through 30 years by gender nonconformity before age 11 years. We examined the prevalence of bullying victimization by gender nonconformity, then ascertained whether increased exposure to abuse and bullying accounted for possible increased risk of depressive symptoms. We further compared results stratified by sexual orientation. Gender nonconformity was a strong predictor of depressive symptoms beginning in adolescence, particularly among males and heterosexuals. Physical and emotional bullying and abuse, both inside and outside the home, accounted for much of this increased risk.

This paper argues that subtle discrimination is now the principal scaffolding for segregation in the United States. The author suggests this scaffolding is built of “micro-inequities”: apparently small events which are often ephemeral and hard-to-prove, events which are covert, often unintentional, frequently unrecognized by the perpetrator. Micro-inequities occur wherever people are perceived to be “different”: Caucasians in a Japanese-owned company, African-Americans in a white firm, women in a traditionally male environment, Jews and Moslems in a traditionally Protestant environment. These mechanisms of prejudice against persons of difference are usually small in nature, but not trivial in effect. They are especially powerful taken together. (As one drop of water has little effect, though continuous drops may be destructive, one racist slight may be insignificant but many such slights cause serious damage.) Micro-inequities work both by excluding the person of difference and by making that person less self-confident and less productive. An employer may prevent such damage by developing programs on diversity, like “valuing differences” and team-building. The author does not believe micro-inequities should be made the subject of anti-discrimination legislation.

Today’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth come out at younger ages, and public support for LGBT issues has dramatically increased, so why do LGBT youth continue to be at high risk for compromised mental health? We provide an overview of the contemporary context for LGBT youth, followed by a review of current science on LGBT youth mental health. Research in the past decade has identified risk and protective factors for mental health, which point to promising directions for prevention, intervention, and treatment. Legal and policy successes have set the stage for advances in programs and practices that may foster LGBT youth mental health. Implications for clinical care are discussed, and important areas for new research and practice are identified.
Bullying is common in U.S. schools and is linked to emotional, behavioral, and academic risk for school-aged students. School policies and practices focused on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) have been designed to reduce bullying and show promising results. Most studies have drawn from students’ reports. We examined teachers’ reports of bullying problems in their schools along with their assessments of school safety, combined with principals’ reports of SOGI-focused policies and practices. Merging two independent sources of data from over 3000 teachers (California School Climate Survey) and nearly 100 school principals (School Health Profiles) at the school level, we used multi-level models to understand bullying problems in schools. Our results show that SOGI-focused policies reported by principals do not have a strong independent association with teachers’ reports of bullying problems in their schools. However, in schools with more SOGI-focused policies, the association between teachers’ assessments of school safety and bullying problems is stronger. Recent developments in education law and policy in the United States and their relevance for student well-being are discussed.

Sexual orientation has been a debated risk factor for adolescent suicidality over the past 20 years. This study examined the link between sexual orientation and suicidality, using data that are nationally representative and that include other critical youth suicide risk factors. Data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health were examined. Survey logistic regression was used to control for sample design effects. There is a strong link between adolescent sexual orientation and suicidal thoughts and behaviors. The strong effect of sexual orientation on suicidal thoughts is mediated by critical youth suicide risk factors, including depression, hopelessness, alcohol abuse, recent suicide attempts by a peer or a family member, and experiences of victimization. The findings provide strong evidence that sexual minority youths are more likely than their peers to think about and attempt suicide.

Gay–Straight Alliances (GSAs) can foster action-oriented engagement among straight youth allies. The objective of the current exploratory study was to identify factors related to straight youth allies’ greater engagement in GSAs. Participants included 156 straight members of 48 high school GSAs (78.2% female, Mage = 15.71) who attended regional GSA conferences in 2013. The survey asked youth to report their engagement in their GSA based on multiple items, and it measured factors external to the GSA and GSA-specific experiences that could be related to GSA engagement. In an overall model with all factors as independent variables and engagement as the dependent variable, initial positive feelings after the first few GSA meetings and having more current LGBT friends emerged as the clearest contributors. This study broadens our understanding of how factors external to the GSA and GSA-specific experiences relate to straight youth’s role in promoting social change through their GSA engagement.

The article is a call for action to recognize the health needs of transgender people, establish legal protection for transgender community, and the need for more research on the topic.
Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, also termed sexual-minority youth, are at high risk for being bullied. We used three waves of data from the Healthy Passages longitudinal study of public-school students in and around Birmingham, Alabama; Houston; and Los Angeles County. At baseline, 5147 of 6663 children (77%) in randomly sampled schools participated; 4268 children completed interviews at all three waves and answered key items for this analysis. Sexual-minority status was derived from the combined responses to two items in the 10th-grade survey — one on self-identified sexual orientation and one on sexual attraction (21% of girls and 8% of boys reported that they were not 100% heterosexual or straight or not attracted only to the opposite sex). We examined two outcomes: a single-item bullying measure and a six-item peer-victimization scale covering a range of behaviors spanning social exclusion and physical harm. Children were classified as having been bullied or victimized if they had these experiences at least once a week. As early as 5th grade, before most youth are likely to be aware of or to disclose their sexual orientation, girls and boys who 5 years later were considered to be sexual minorities on the basis of self-reported information were more likely than other children to report that they had been bullied and victimized. Although bullying and victimization in the two groups declined with age, a finding that is consistent with prior research, sexual-minority youth experienced higher levels across grades than other children did. Our findings underscore the importance of clinicians routinely screening youth for bullying experiences, remaining vigilant about indicators of possible bullying (e.g., unexplained trauma and school avoidance), and creating a safe environment in which youth feel comfortable discussing their sexuality. Further research could determine the effectiveness of incorporating the experiences of sexual minorities into general school-based antibullying programs.

This article discusses the effects of bullying and the role of pediatricians to address the problem of bullying.

There has been growing attention to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) in child and adolescent development, public discourse, and research. A strong tension is clear: The right for participation, and thus representation in data, science, and policy, is often understood as conflicting with the right for protection, that is, safety from disclosure of a marginalized orientation or identity. Both participation and protection rights are also closely tied to young people’s rights to privacy (or lack thereof). We review recent scholarship on SOGI in developmental sciences in light of this tension. We focus on schooling as a salient developmental context for all youth, a place that is historically unsafe for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth, and a context where researchers have identified gaps of knowledge as well as strategies for improvement. Our review focuses on the politics and processes of SOGI inclusion in education data collection efforts in the United States, an area where SOGI data collection is scarce in comparison to other systems of care, such as health. We suggest that one solution to the dilemma would be that youth have the right to disclose their SOGI information to whom and when they choose. We offer strategies on how to hold these tensions in balance and move toward SOGI-inclusive research and data collection so that LGBTQ youth can be represented in data, science, and policy.
This article reviews current research on bullying during adolescence. The complexity of bullying behaviors during the adolescent time period are discussed and a review of the developmental literature on adolescence provides suggestions for why current bullying prevention and intervention programs are less effective for this age group. Current anti-bullying policies and legislation are reviewed under a framework of adolescent brain development and the development of consequential thinking. Suggestions for implementing social-emotional learning programming during the adolescent period are provided and a novel approach using social media is presented. In order to effectively combat bullying during this developmental period, programming must focus on positive behavioral development and restorative practices.

In this article, the authors review research on individual, peer, and school contributions that may be critical factors for enhancing efforts to address bullying among students. Methodological challenges are delineated, with an emphasis on how bullying is defined and assessed and the subsequent implications for bullying prevention and intervention program evaluation. The impact of school-based anti-bullying programs and the challenges currently facing educators and researchers in this area are discussed. The article concludes with a proposal for a broader, ecologically based model of school bullying based on the emerging literature.

This study examined effects of adolescent males' perceptions of being bullied because of verbal taunts related to gender nonconformity (i.e., "They say I'm gay"). Participants included 251 ninth- (n = 77), tenth- (n = 96), and eleventh- (n = 78) grade students in a private, all-male college preparatory school. Participants were divided into two groups based on whether they were bullied by being called gay. Out of the 251 participants, 121 (48%) reported having been bullied and 127 (50%) stated that they had not been bullied during the past year (2% did not report). Of the 121 participants who had been bullied, 32 (26%) reported that they had been bullied because others called them gay (Group 1) and 89 (74%) reported that they had been bullied for other reasons, exclusive of being called gay (Group 2). Consistent with predictions, the boys who were bullied because they were called gay experienced greater psychological distress, greater verbal and physical bullying, and more negative perceptions of their school experiences than boys who were bullied for other reasons. Implications for school-based intervention services for bullying are discussed.

Homophobic victimization, and specifically name-calling, has been associated with greater psychological distress and alcohol use in adolescents. This longitudinal study examines whether sexual orientation moderates these associations and also differentiates between the effects of name-calling from friends and nonfriends. Results are based on 1,325 students from three Midwestern high schools who completed in-school surveys in 2012 and 2013. Linear regression analysis was used to examine the associations among homophobic name-calling victimization and changes in anxiety symptoms, depressive symptoms, and alcohol use one year later, controlling for other forms of victimization and demographics. Homophobic name-calling victimization by friends was not associated with changes in psychological distress or alcohol use among either students who self-identified as heterosexual or those who self-identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB). In contrast, homophobic name-calling by nonfriends was associated with increased psychological distress over a one-year period among LGB students and increased drinking among heterosexual students. Homophobic name-calling victimization, specifically from nonfriends, can adversely affect adolescent well-being over time and, thus, is important to address in school-based bullying prevention programs. School staff and parents should be aware that both LGB and heterosexual adolescents are targets of homophobic name-calling but may tend to react to this type of victimization in different ways. Further research is needed to understand the mechanisms through which homophobic victimization increases the risk of psychological distress and alcohol use over time.

Although intimate partner violence (IPV) is highly prevalent among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth, little is known regarding its developmental patterns, risk factors, or health-related consequences. We examined IPV victimization in an ethnically diverse community-based convenience sample of 248 LGBT youth (aged 16-20 at study outset) who provided six waves of data across a 5-year period. Results from multilevel models indicated high, stable rates of IPV victimization across this developmental period (ages 16-25 years) that differed between demographic groups. Overall, 45.2% of LGBT youth were physically abused and 16.9% were sexually victimized by a dating partner during the study. Odds of physical victimization were 76% higher for female than for male LGBT youth, 2.46 times higher for transgender than for cisgender youth, and 2 to 4 times higher for racial-ethnic minorities than for White youth. The prevalence of physical IPV declined with age for White youth but remained stable for racial-ethnic minorities. Odds of sexual victimization were 3.42 times higher for transgender than for cisgender youth, 75% higher for bisexual or questioning than for gay or lesbian youth, and increased more with age for male than female participants. Within-person analyses indicated that odds of physical IPV were higher at times when youth reported more sexual partners, more marijuana use, and lower social support; odds of sexual IPV were higher at times when youth reported more sexual partners and more LGBT-related victimization. In prospective analyses, sexual IPV predicted increased psychological distress; both IPV types marginally predicted increased marijuana use.


Bullying is a significant public health issue among middle school-aged youth. Current prevention programs have only a moderate impact. Cell phone text messaging technology (mHealth) can potentially overcome existing challenges, particularly those that are structural (e.g., limited time that teachers can devote to non-educational topics). To date, the description of the development of empirically-based mHealth-delivered bullying prevention programs are lacking in the literature. To describe the development of BullyDown, a text messaging-based bullying prevention program for middle school students, guided by the Social-Emotional Learning model. We implemented five activities over a 12-month period: (1) national focus groups (n=37 youth) to gather acceptability of program components; (2) development of content; (3) a national Content Advisory Team (n=9 youth) to confirm content tone; and (4) an internal team test of software functionality followed by a beta test (n=22 youth) to confirm the enrollment protocol and the feasibility and acceptability of the program. Recruitment experiences suggested that Facebook advertising was less efficient than using a recruitment firm to recruit youth nationally, and recruiting within schools for the pilot test was feasible. Feedback from the Content Advisory Team suggests a preference for 2-4 brief text messages per day. Beta test findings suggest that BullyDown is both feasible and acceptable: 100% of youth completed the follow-up survey, 86% of whom liked the program. Text messaging appears to be a feasible and acceptable delivery method for bullying prevention programming delivered to middle school students.

**Books, Book Chapters & Reviews**


In this chapter, Chmielewski and colleagues present findings from a multi-method, collaborative research project examining the disproportionate rates and consequences of school discipline for LGBTQ youth of color at the intersection of race, gender and sexuality. Using both survey and focus group data with LGBTQ youth of color in New York City public schools, they document the ways in which these students are marginalized through overt discrimination in school discipline practices as well as a more subtle, yet insidious policing of their gender and sexuality. Based on those findings, the authors discuss the psychological impacts for LGBTQ youth as they negotiate these hostile environments and offer interventions based on their wisdom and insights.
Goldblum P. Youth suicide and bullying: challenges and strategies for prevention and intervention. 2015.


Youth Suicide and Bullying presents an authoritative review of the science demonstrating the links between youth suicide and bullying alongside informed discussion and evidence-based recommendations.

The Handbook of Bullying in Schools provides a comprehensive review and analysis of what is known about the worldwide bullying phenomena. It is the first volume to systematically review and integrate what is known about how cultural and regional issues affect bullying behaviour and its prevention.

This article reviews Swearer, Espelage, and Napolitano's 2009 book, Bullying Prevention and Intervention: Realistic Strategies for Schools. Applying a social-ecological framework, the authors provide a data-based decision-making model for evaluating current bullying behaviors and selecting prevention and intervention strategies to reduce bullying. This model can be applied to bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students.

This book review highlights three main contributions by Donn Short's book "Don't Be So Gay": Queers, Bullying, and Making Schools Safe (2012) to the field of study on bullying and queer youth: students as experts, legal pluralism, and ethnographic descriptions of different schools within one school board. Short offers a new theoretical lens to deepen educators' understanding of the barriers to implementation of new laws and policies designed to protect queer youth from bullying and harassment in Canadian schools.

Written in an accessible Q&A format, here, finally, is the go-to resource for parents hoping to understand and communicate with their gay child. Through their LGBTQ-oriented site, the authors are uniquely experienced to answer parents' many questions and share insight and guidance on both emotional and practical topics. Filled with real-life experiences from gay kids and parents, this is the book gay kids want their parents to read.

The issue of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) violence has been co-opted by a bullying industry that defines the problem in terms of antisocial individuals, discriminatory attitudes, and aggressive behaviors. The concept of gender policing advances the conversation about LGBTQ violence by drawing attention to the heteronormative social norms that are used to reproduce the lines between normal, different, and unacceptable. These (hetero) normative boundaries are used by youth (and adults) to regulate the identities and expressions of queer students in K-12 schools. This chapter argues that the conceptual shift from bullying to gender policing creates possibilities for transformative educational practice because the cultural norms underlying the violence become the objects of inquiry and targets of reform, rather than the violent behaviors themselves.

This review summarizes Ian Rivers’s Homophobic Bullying: Research and Theoretical Perspectives, which gives the reader an overview of homophobic bullying over the past 20 years and where we are today on the issue. Rivers’s work provides a summary of what is meant by homophobic bullying and how it has been theorized within a school setting. Rivers also considers the longer-term effects of homophobic bullying and the role of teacher intervention.

Snapp and Russell identify factors that give rise to and perpetuate discipline disparities towards LGBTQ youth, as well as put forth strategies to reduce them. Challenges include an overly punitive approach to discipline and security in schools; untrained and overextended school staff; explicit and implicit bias towards against LGBTQ students; and a lack of school support for LGBTQ students. The authors suggest non-punitive discipline practices and the creation of safe and affirming spaces for LGBTQ students, with properly trained school personnel. Although specific to LGBTQ students, these policies have the potential to improve safety and learning for all students due to their emphasis on inclusion and respect for diversity. These cross-constituency alliances identify, advocate for, and implement school practices and policies that will reduce discipline disparities for all students.


Grounded in research and extensive experience in schools, this engaging book describes practical ways to combat bullying at the school, class, and individual levels. Step-by-step strategies are presented for developing school- and districtwide policies, coordinating team-based prevention efforts, and implementing targeted interventions with students at risk. Special topics include how to involve teachers, parents, and peers in making schools safer; ways to address the root causes of bullying and victimization; the growing problem of online or cyberbullying; and approaches to evaluating intervention effectiveness. In a large-size format with convenient lay-flat binding, the book features helpful reproducibles, concrete examples, and questions for reflection and discussion.


Bullying is not what it is widely thought to be. The usual focus on behaviour and relationships in anti-bullying policies and programmes fails to address bullying as an outcome of when some children are perceived as being different from the norm, such as queer children and youth. Critiquing academic research and dominant ideas, this chapter argues that bullying has become a problem of widespread concern in the light of political and social contexts that thrust it into the public and media spotlight. Meanwhile, queer children, among others, are left at risk of further bullying, ostracization, and other forms of violence. The author advocates for a seismic shift in how bullying is understood, what he refers to as queering the notion of bullying, because ongoing efforts have failed to reduce it in significant and lasting ways.

**Documentaries & Video Material**

**Bullied: A student, a school and a case that made history**

*Bullied* is a documentary film that chronicles one student’s ordeal at the hands of anti-gay bullies and offers an inspiring message of hope to those fighting harassment today. It can become a cornerstone of anti-bullying efforts in middle and high schools.

**Bullying, It Stops Here (Anderson Cooper Special)**

CNN, Facebook, Cartoon Network and Time Inc. have teamed up for a special multi-platform effort aimed at taking a stand to help stop the bullying crisis.

**GLSEN’s National School Climate Survey**

A short video about the GLSEN’s report on the experiences of LGBT youth in schools, including the in-school resources that support LGBT students’ well-being, the extent of the challenges that they face at school, and insights into many other aspects of LGBT students’ experiences.

**GLSEN’s State Maps. Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network.**

One of the most effective steps that schools, school districts and states can take to improve school climate and make schools safer is to enact safe schools laws and policies. When GLSEN uses the term “Safe Schools Laws”, we are actually referring to two distinct types of laws that protect LGBT students in schools.
“It is our job to create a safe environment”

Dr. Mark Schuster on the study about bullying of gay youth.

My life in pink ("Ma vie en rose")

Ludovic is a transgender girl who can’t wait to grow up to be a woman. When her family discovers the little girl blossoming in her they are forced to contend with their own discomfort and the lack of understanding from their new neighbors. Their anger and impatience cave and Ludovic is sent to see a psychiatrist in the hopes of fixing whatever is wrong with her. A movie that addresses transgender and gender issues in general through the eyes of a child.

The Year We Thought about Love

The film goes behind the scenes of one of the oldest queer youth theaters in America, with camera crew slipping into classrooms, kitchens, subways, and rehearsal rooms with this fearless and endearing troupe. The film introduces a transgender teenager kicked out of her house, a devout Christian challenging his church’s homophobia, and a girl who prefers to wear boys’ clothing even as she models dresses on the runway.

Websites, Toolkits & Trainings

American Civil Liberties Union (aclu.org)  LGBT youth and schools resources and links

Building support for schools that openly affirm the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity (groundspark.org)  This toolkit is for parents, students, educators, researchers, and advocates who want to ensure broad community support for school programs and policies that address stigma or bias connected to sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. It is useful for anyone who may need to convince others of the merits of Gay-Straight Alliances, gender-neutral restrooms, and school lessons and bullying prevention programs that include people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Bullying and LGBT Youth (stopbullying.gov)  Resources from stopbullying.gov on strategies to prevent and address bullying of LGBT youth.

Community Action Toolkit (stopbullying.gov)  The Community Action Toolkit includes materials to create a community event using the research, ideas and bullying prevention and response strategies. This toolkit will help you plan, execute and assess your community event to prevent and stop bullying.

CDC’s Report on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Surveillance (cdc.gov)  CDC releases new national data on health risk behaviors among lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) high school students. The study highlights the need for coordinated action to improve the health and well-being of LGB students.

Eyes on Bullying Toolkit (eyesonbullying.org)  This toolkit provides specific insights, strategies, activities, and resources to address bullying. It is designed especially for parents, caregivers, educators, and healthcare providers who work with children and youth in homes, early childhood programs, schools (K-12), after-school and youth programs, camps, and healthcare settings.

Family Acceptance Project (familyproject.sfsu.edu)  The Family Acceptance Project™ is a research, intervention, education and policy initiative that works to prevent health and mental health risks for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children and youth, including suicide, homelessness and HIV – in the context of their families, cultures and faith communities. We use a research-based, culturally grounded approach to help ethnically, socially and religiously diverse families to support their LGBT children.
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<tr>
<th>Resource Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>GLSEN Ready, Set, Respect! Elementary Toolkit</td>
<td>The kit provides a set of tools that will help you prepare to teach about respect and includes lesson plans that can help you seize teachable moments. The lessons focus on name-calling, bullying and bias, LGBT-inclusive family diversity and gender roles and diversity and are designed to be used as either standalone lessons or as part of a school-wide anti-bias or bullying prevention program.</td>
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<td>GLSEN Safe Space Kit for LGBTQ youth</td>
<td>Designed to help you create a safe space for LGBTQ youth in schools, the Safe Space Kit is GLSEN’s Guide to Being an Ally to LGBTQ Students. The guide provides concrete strategies that will help you support LGBTQ students, educate about anti-LGBT bias and advocate for changes in your school.</td>
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<td>Human Rights Campaign Foundation: Welcoming Schools</td>
<td>A comprehensive approach to creating respectful and supportive elementary schools with resources and professional development to embrace family diversity, create LGBTQ-inclusive schools, prevent bias-based bullying and gender stereotyping, and support trans gender and gender-expansive students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBT Safe and Supportive Schools Toolkit</td>
<td>This toolkit provides a model that aims to create safe and supportive schools. It focuses on 6 key action areas: (1) safe and supportive environment; (2) community partnership; (3) direct support from LGBT youth; (4) curriculum; (5) staff organization and development and (6) policy and planning.</td>
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<td>PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center</td>
<td>Founded in 2006, PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center actively leads social change, so that bullying is no longer considered an accepted childhood rite of passage. PACER provides innovative resources for students, parents, educators, and others, and recognizes bullying as a serious community issue that impacts education, physical and emotional health, and the safety and well-being of students.</td>
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<td>Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays</td>
<td>The website includes various resources on bullying, including the LGBT-inclusive curricula, training toolkits, and tips on how to make school environments safe for LGBT youth.</td>
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<td>Pennsylvania Bullying Prevention Toolkit</td>
<td>Resources for parents, educators, and professionals serving children, youth and families.</td>
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<td>Speaking OUT against bullying</td>
<td>Speaking OUT is a list of resources for kids in trouble and the people who care about them. The list was assembled by the GLBT Round Table (GLBTRT) of the American Library Association (ALA).</td>
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<tr>
<td>STOMP Out Bullying Student Participation Toolkit</td>
<td>The student toolkit is designed to raise awareness and increase understanding on how to respond to bullying and cyberbullying.</td>
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<td>The Williams Institute</td>
<td>The Williams Institute is dedicated to conducting rigorous, independent research on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy. Website includes reports, census &amp; demographics, and events postings.</td>
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<td>The Trevor Project</td>
<td>The Trevor Project is an American non-profit organization founded in 1998 focused on suicide prevention efforts among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning and other queer youth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tips for Teachers: Ally yourself with LGBT students</td>
<td>Six LGBT-friendly actions teachers and school staff can take to turn their classroom and hallways into Safe Zones.</td>
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Toolkit for Teachers: Dealing with homophobia and homophobic bullying in Scottish Schools (lgbtyouth.org/uk)

TransAthlete (transathlete.com)

- Designed to help teachers and educators to combat homophobia and homophobic bullying.
- A resource for students, athletes, coaches, and administrators to find information about trans inclusion in athletics at various levels of play.