Research on the LGBTQ Student Experience:

2010 State of Higher Education for LGBT People:
(Source: http://www.campuspride.org/research/projects-publications/)

- LGBT-identified students face significantly higher rates of harassment and discrimination than their heterosexual peers.
- LGBQ respondents were more than twice as likely to be targets of derogatory remarks and singled out as a “resident authority” regarding LGBT issues.
- Respondents who identified as trans* and gender non-conforming experienced higher rates of harassment than cis-gendered men and women.
- Those with multiple minority identities, such as racial and sexual identity, experienced multiple forms of oppression.

2011 GLSEN National School Climate Survey

- The vast majority of students often or frequently heard homophobic language, such as “dyke,” “faggot,” or “gay” used negatively at school.
- The majority heard homophobic and negative remarks about gender expression from teacher and school staff.
- Approximately half of students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation or gender expression, with the vast majority being verbally harassed and a significant minority being physically harassed.
- The majority of students who were harassed or assaulted did not report the incident to the school, believing this would not affect the situation or would worsen the situation.
- Students who experienced higher levels victimization were much more likely to have depression, lower levels of self-esteem, lower grade point averages, and to report planning not to pursue any post-secondary education.

Solutions to these problems that were suggested include: creating Gay-Straight Alliances, developing LBGT-inclusive curricula, supportive staff and educators, and implementing comprehensive bullying and harassment policies.


ABSTRACT Data from this study were collected from 904 high school students surveyed in central North Carolina concerning verbal harassment and homophobic language. Most students heard homophobic remarks such as “that’s so gay,” “you’re so gay,” “faggot,” “dyke,” and “queer” in school with alarming frequency. Additionally, students reported that teachers and school staff rarely intervened when homophobic remarks were made in their presence. Analyses revealed that students from schools with non-harassment policies, including sexual orientation, had lower levels of students hearing homophobic remarks than students from schools without inclusive policies. Furthermore, results suggest an association between the frequency with which teachers and school staff interrupt homophobic language and verbal harassment and the inclusion of sexual orientation in school non-harassment policies. Other research has shown that schools with frequent verbal harassment and homophobic language lead to sexual minority students feeling distressed and unsafe in school, which may result in students skipping school, performing poorly, and dropping out. In order to create safe learning environments, schools must (a) train personnel on how to prevent harassment of sexual minority students; (b) assist and support Gay-Straight Alliances; (c) provide information resources related to sexual orientation and gender identity; and (d) include sexual orientation and gender identity in policies against harassment, bullying, and discrimination.