



Cyndi Lauper
Artist and civil rights activist

Bullying
Why LGBT youth are more at risk

Workplace diversity
Creating an inclusive environment



SPEAK OUT



Dan Savage, Co-Founder, It Gets Better Project, discusses sending a positive message to youth. **See page 5**

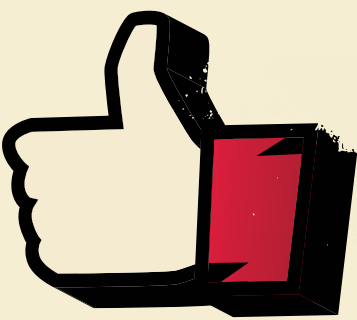
“For so many gay kids, there are no gay role models in their lives, no examples of what a healthy, happy gay life looks like. I realized, we could provide them with that example.”

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PROMOTING POSITIVE CHANGE

Learn about Lady Gaga’s pledge to support homeless youth

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CHALLENGES



YOUTH LEADERS
GLSEN Student Ambassadors, a national team of 18 youth leaders from across the country who serve as GLSEN student spokespeople, prepare for a day of workshops at GLSEN's Safe Schools Media Summit in Los Angeles in July.
CREDIT: CONRAD VENTUR

Investing in the future

The loss of one young life is a cost too high. At least, you would hope that it would not take much more to convince people of the urgent need for action to end bias and bullying directed at lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people in our schools and our society. But, over the past twelve months, I have continued to make that case, repeatedly, to decision makers whose attention was newly captured by the relentless drumbeat of tragedy in the news last fall.

It is utterly senseless to me that bullying and harassment of students continues, and that LGBT youth remain central targets. But I do not expect it to stop any time soon unless we all get serious about investing in cultures of true respect in our schools and our communities. Our culture is growing more diverse, not less. Diversity is just a fancy word for “difference,” and difference often kicks up fear. The violence that comes from fear is a clear result of our failure to help young people learn a different way and, sadly, to model better behavior ourselves. Regardless of who perpetrates it, however, violence is not an acceptable response.

In the words of Saad, a GLSEN Stu-

dent Ambassador from Texas: “Instead of being oppressed by our differences, we should embrace them.”

Respect cultural differences
Embrace diversity. Understand and respect cultural differences. Those are the messages that schools, communities and workplaces hear increasingly. If we fail at this mandate, the cost is remarkably high. For our LGBT youth, violence and bullying born of fear can have tragic consequences. In order to eliminate this problem, we must support students as they emerge as citizens of an increasingly diverse and global community—reducing the ranks of both bullies and victims.

In June, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released a study that documents the broad range of consequences related to the discrimination and stigmatization faced by lesbian, gay and bisexual youth, reporting elevated rates of health risk behaviors and higher rates of victimization on school grounds as compared to heterosexual youth. GLSEN’s research further illustrates the damage wrought by experiences that stand in the way of well-being, learning and achievement for young people who are LGBT. GLSEN’s 2009 National School Climate Survey, a biennial survey first launched in 1999 to examine the school experiences



Eliza Byard, Ph.D.
Executive Director, GLSEN

“Embrace diversity. Understand and respect cultural differences. Those are the messages that schools, communities and workplaces hear increasingly. If we fail at this mandate, the cost is remarkably high.”

of LGBT students nationally, found that 30 percent of LGBT students missed school at least once in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, which is more than four times higher than the general school population. The survey also found that LGBT students who were harassed had lower GPAs and were less likely to plan to attend college.

Support our youth
In this publication you will learn about the range of challenges LGBT youth face and the key organizations working to advocate for and support them. GLSEN’s work focuses on issues in K-12 schools. Our programs and initiatives, and the work of all of our partner organizations profiled in these pages, support the healthy development, individual well-being and community integration of young people who face significant additional barriers in life.

We want them to shine, to reach their full potential as high school or college graduates, and become the kind of people that have so much to give back to their communities and our country. Today’s students are our future ...and yours.

ELIZA BYARD, PH.D.
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Supportive families, healthy children

Families love their children and want the best for them. Families want to protect their children from harm. These are two constants I've seen in decades of work with youth and families. And when their children come out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT), family reactions to that LGBT child have a compelling impact on what the future holds for them.



CAITLIN RYAN, PH.D., ACSW
Director of the Family Acceptance Project at San Francisco State University—a research, intervention, education and policy initiative to help ethnically and religiously diverse families support their LGBT children.

Youth are at much higher risk when their families reject them. This expression of shame prevents youth from learning about their identity. They are far more likely to suffer from

high rates of depression, use illegal drugs, attempt suicide and engage in risky sexual behavior. In fact, LGBT young adults who are highly rejected by their families during adolescence are over eight times more likely to


attempt suicide as those who come from families that are not rejecting. LGBT young adults from accepting families have much better health and higher self-esteem. Their risk for suicide, depression, and substance abuse are greatly reduced. They have a positive sense of the future, have better relationships with their families and are much more likely to want to become parents themselves.

Many parents and caregivers want to keep LGBT youth from harm by telling them to “tone it down,” not to talk about their LGBT identity or not to “look or act gay.” What parents don’t realize is that these messages that are intended to protect are instead experienced as rejection by their LGBT children.


Few parents would allow anyone to mistreat their children. While LGBT people have made great strides forward, bullying and victimization persist. Coming home to a supportive family—especially one that will advocate for their child in schools and families—makes a huge difference in a young person’s life.

Many of us are working to offer parents ways to understand and accept their children for who they are. By engaging, educating and supporting families, we can create safe and accepting homes for those whose lives depend on it.

CAITLIN RYAN, PH.D., ACSW
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WE RECOMMEND



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Laurence Boschetto, President and CEO, Drafftcb
As someone whose grandma told him not to back away from difficult situations, he learned firsthand that life indeed gets better. He has also made sure, as the leader of Drafftcb, to share that message far and wide.

“When people ask, ‘What’s it like being a gay man in business?’ I take offense to that because I’m a man. Defining me by characteristics I was given at birth—like being Italian, Catholic and gay—is so limiting.”

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VICTORY
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NEWS

TIP

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SUPPORT GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCES



Question: How can teachers and other school leaders help provide a safe environment for youth?
Answer: They can educate themselves about LGBT issues and promote equality in the classroom.

Combating bullying

The schoolyard bully is a cliché of books and television. In reality, however, bullying can have serious, lasting consequences. And young people who are bullied because of their sexual orientation or gender identity often have fewer resources to help them.



Nearly 9 out of 10 LGBT students experienced verbal or physical harassment at school in the previous year.

Nearly 9 out of 10 LGBT students experienced verbal or physical harassment at school in the previous year, according to a 2009 study by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). This was linked to increased depression and anxiety and decreased self-esteem.

Carolyn Laub, executive director of the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, says that students bullied because of real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity experience “disproportionately high rates of negative consequences,” including lower grades, dropping out of school, depression, and substance abuse.

Thomas Krever MPA, executive

director of The Hetrick-Martin Institute, the nation’s oldest and largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) at-risk youth service provider, says that even when resources exist for LGBTQ youth, they may hesitate to use them if they are not open about being LGBTQ.

Teachers and school administrators must educate themselves about LGBTQ issues and commit to students’ safety, “regardless of their own personal feelings,” Krever asserts. “Safe space in a school isn’t a privilege, it’s a young person’s right.”

Anti-bullying policies State and local anti-bullying policies are a good first step toward awareness and accountability, he says, but must have adequate funding for monitoring and evaluating, resources, and staff training.

Although adults must take action, Laub says, “students are fueling this movement.” One way is by forming gay-straight alliance (GSA) clubs to support each other and create positive change. There are now over 4,000 GSAs around the country, many with a large percentage of straight allies.

Students feel safer if their school simply has a GSA, the

GLSEN study found. Laub adds that “the benefits are amplified” for students who participate.

And U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan issued a letter in June reminding educators that the law requires any school receiving federal funds to provide all student groups, including GSAs, with equal access to school resources. “By encouraging dialogue and providing supportive resources,” he wrote, GSAs “can help make schools safe and affirming environments for everyone.”

DANA RUDOLPH
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Make it better now for LGBT youth

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth shouldn’t have to suffer through bullying in school. Here are some concrete steps you can take to make it better now for LGBT:

1 Support a Gay-Straight Alliance in your school or community. GSAs can be a life-saving source of support for students dealing with bullying. Show this support through a letter to the local paper, helping raise money for the club, or even starting an initiative like donating books that address lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth issues to the school’s library.

2 Intervene when you see bullying, and spread the word that transphobic and homophobic slurs are unacceptable.

3 Advocate for a non-discrimination or anti-bullying policy in your school district that specifically includes protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Make sure the school district then publicizes that policy, so that students experiencing harassment know how to get help.

4 Call up your Congressional representatives and tell them to support the Safe Schools Improvement Act

and the Student Non-Discrimination Act. Contact your local ACLU to learn about the statewide safe schools legislation you should lobby for in your state.

5 Write a letter! Reach out to your former school’s principal, let him or her know what it was like for LGBT youth when you were there, and ask the administration to make it better for today’s students. Go to “Write a Letter, Make It Better” at makeitbetterproject.org for suggestions and to publish your story as an open letter.

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GSAs can be a life-saving source of support for students dealing with bullying.



RESOURCES

SAFE SCHOOLS FOR ALL
 Queer youth fight for safe schools for all at GSA Network's Queer Youth Advocacy Day.
 PHOTO: CAROLYN LAUB

Safe Schools

The prevalence of anti-LGBT language and victimization are proven to have a negative effect on LGBT students’ achievements. The utility of interventions can both lessen the negative effects of a hostile school climate and promote a positive educational experience.

The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

➔ The leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students: glsen.org.

GSA Network

➔ A youth leadership organization that connects school-based Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) to each other and community resources through peer support, leadership development, and training: gsanetwork.org.

It Gets Better Project

➔ User-created videos that remind LGBT teenagers that they are not alone—and it will get better: itgetsbetter.org.

PFLAG Safe Schools for All

➔ Cultivating Respect, a program to train and certify members to go directly into schools with community resources, staff training, model policies, and creative programs that address bullying and harassment: pflag.org

American Civil Liberties Union LGBT Project

➔ Schools and youth, working to make public schools safe and bias-free for LGBT students, defending their free speech in school, and working to help students start GSA clubs: aclu.org/lgbt-rights/youth-schools

The Matthew Shepard Foundation

➔ Supports diversity programs in education and helps youth organizations establish environments where young people can feel safe and be themselves: matthewshepard.org.

Safe Schools Coalition

➔ An international public-private partnership in support of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth: safeschoolscoalition.org

Stopbullying.gov

➔ Provides information from various government agencies on how kids, teens, young adults, parents, educators and others in the community can prevent or stop bullying.

Welcoming Schools

➔ An LGBT-inclusive approach to addressing family diversity, gender stereotyping and bullying and name-calling in K-5 learning environments: welcomingschools.org

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KNOW THE FACTS



DON'T MISS



Carl Siciliano
Executive Director, The Ali Forney Center

A call to action

■ In the past year it has become apparent that LGBT youth face disproportionate abuse and harm in our society. Much attention has rightly been focused on LGBT youth bullied in schools. However, too little attention has been focused on the abuse and rejection many LGBT youth face in their homes from their parents, which has driven tens of thousands of LGBT youth into homelessness.

Emerging data on the connection between family rejection and LGBT youth homelessness should horrify anyone who cares about the welfare of young people—up to 40 percent of the homeless youth in the United States are LGBT. Homeless LGBT youth experience more violence, sexual assault and suicide than straight youth. LGBT youth rejected by their families face much greater risk of medical and mental health problems and substance abuse than those accepted by their families.

We must better protect the LGBT youth struggling to survive on the streets of our nation. There are fewer than 200 shelter beds nationwide dedicated to LGBT youth, and in mainstream youth shelters they often face violence and condemnation. In New York City, a group of youth providers and advocates have launched the “Campaign for Youth Shelter,” calling for government and private funds to provide beds for the hundreds of youths on the streets of NYC without shelter. Similar efforts need to be undertaken by LGBT leaders in locations across the country. Far more energy and resources from within the LGBT movement need to be dedicated to protecting these youth.

It is remarkable to see the difference it makes in the lives of LGBT youth when they are provided with housing and support. In the housing program run by the Ali Forney Center we see youth able to thrive. Many become enrolled in college, get jobs, move on to their own apartments and live healthy adult lives. But we only have 57 beds, and scores of kids from all over the country are languishing on the waiting list.

As a society we need to do a much better job of protecting LGBT youth in their homes and on the streets.

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Taking action to combat LGBT youth homelessness

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth make up at least 20 percent of homeless youth in the United States, although they are only about 10 percent of the overall youth population.

Both the causes and effects are sobering—but neighbors, policy makers, corporations, and celebrities are taking steps to help.

LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ youth share many of the same reasons for homelessness—including family conflict, physical abuse, substance use, and neglect—but for LGBTQ youth, the family conflict may center around their sexual orientation and gender identity, and lead ultimately to rejection by their families.

Richard Hooks Wayman, executive director of the Hearth Connection, a nonprofit working to end homelessness in Minnesota, says that homeless LGBTQ youth “experience enhanced barriers to reunification” because their families reject them.

The consequences are grim. LGBTQ homeless youth are more likely to be victims of sexual violence than heterosexual ones, according to a 2009 report by Wayman, and are also more likely to have been asked—and agreed—to exchange sex for money, food, drugs, shelter, or clothing.

Debby Shore, executive director of Sasha Bruce Youthwork, a youth service organization in Washington



Lady Gaga
The singer and gay-rights advocate, speaks out in the fight for equality

state, says that LGBTQ youth “are especially vulnerable because of discrimination... including being victims of hate crimes.”

The effects are long-lasting. Theresa Nolan, NYC division director of LGBTQ youth programs for youth service provider Green Chimneys, says, “If we neglect LGBTQ homeless youth, we risk creating LGBTQ adults who are maladapted, addicted, and unable to care for themselves.”

There are signs of progress, however. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services now requires that all organizations serving homeless youth be equipped to serve LGBT youth, for example.

“Lack of federal, state, and local

FACTS

■ **LGBT youth** are disproportionately represented in the homeless youth population.

■ **Family conflict** and the foster care system largely contribute to LGBT youth homelessness.

■ **50 percent** of gay males experienced a negative reaction from their parents when they came out and 26 percent were kicked out of their homes.

■ **78 percent** of gay and transgen-

der youth placed in foster care are removed or run away due to conflict over sexual orientation.

■ **LGBT youth face** more discrimination than their heterosexual counterparts and are at increased risk of violence and harassment on the streets.

■ **LGBT youth are more likely** than their straight counterparts to report discrimination due to their homelessness.

people will experience some form of homelessness this year. One in every five homeless youth in the community identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender,” says Lady Gaga.


“This makes me very angry. Now it’s time for us to fight back. Thanks to my partnership with Virgin Mobile and the Re*Generation Campaign, hundreds of my fans have donated their time working at homeless youth shelters over the course of this year’s tour, and have all gotten free tickets to see the show. But we still need to do more.” As part of this partnership, Virgin Mobile USA’s Re*Generation Campaign and Lady Gaga not only generated more volunteerism but education and resources. Lady Gaga spoke to fans each night heightening awareness and issued a PSA also pledging to match up to \$25,000 in donations. Virgin Mobile has raised nearly \$600,000 since creating the RE*Generation program and generated more than 55,000 hours of volunteerism since the advent of their FREE.I.P. program. The company was recently noted with the 2010 Private Sector Award from the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Up to 40% of homeless U.S. youth are LGBT

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Cyndi Lauper: Artist, civil rights advocate

Why did you decide to focus your philanthropic efforts on the LGBT community, and homeless youth in particular?



The issue of equality for all has always mattered a great deal to me. Growing up in the 1960s, I was inspired as I watched the African-American community stand up against hatred and discrimination. At the same time, I was being raised by a single mother when that was not very accepted. My family was looked down upon and treated differently. So, when I saw my family and friends being discriminated against and hated simply because they love a person—simply for being gay—I knew I had to stand up, and I have never sat down.

As for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender homeless youth, I had a life changing experience a few years ago. I was doing a photo shoot for a music magazine and wanted to include gay and transgender youth in the pictures. So, I went down to the pier here in NYC that they tend to hang out at and met the most amazing group of young people. Kids who were thrown out of their homes by their parents because they were gay or transgender. They were doing what they needed to do to survive, while coming to terms with who they are. They inspired me with their strength and determination to not let the world bring them down. As a mom, I cannot even understand or comprehend




SPEAK UP AND SPEAK OUT. Artist and civil rights advocate Cyndi Lauper takes part in a lighting ceremony at the Empire State Building. On November 4, 2010, the Empire State Building was lit green in symbolic recognition of National Runaway Prevention Month. Designated by the National Runaway Switchboard, green lights are the national symbol for runaway awareness and prevention.

PHOTO: TRUE COLORS FUND

the idea of rejecting or throwing your kid away for any reason, let alone because they are gay or transgender.

How can we motivate the straight community to engage in this movement and promote equality?



The most important thing that all of us straight people who support equality can do is speak up and let our voices be heard. In every successful civil rights movement, the majority has always joined the minority as they marched, as they spoke out publicly. Look to when white people marched alongside Afri-


grabs. Humans are better than this. We can and must do better than this.

What message do you have for LGBT youth?



To stay strong, be yourself. I know that it can be a struggle. While it will get better, I encourage you to reach out to someone you can trust—a family member, a teacher or school counselor, a friend—so you have someone in your life to talk to. If you are able and feel comfortable, I encourage you to get involved in your Gay-Straight Alliance at your school if you have one. They are amazing groups and safe spaces for you to be yourself. Check out GLSEN to learn more about these great groups.

What message do you have for parents?



To love and accept your child, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Our kids do not always turn out the way that we hope, but they are our kids no matter what. While it may be hard for you to overcome beliefs that you may have, there is nothing more important than your kids, their safety and happiness. While you may need time to come to terms with your child being gay or transgender, please let them know that you love them first and foremost.

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www.greenchimneys.org/nyc



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Covenant House
Opening Doors for Homeless Youth

Covenant House is the largest privately-funded agency in the Americas providing food, shelter, immediate crisis care, and essential services to homeless, throwaway, and runaway kids.

www.covenanthouse.org



Sasha Bruce Youthwork

Making a difference in the lives of homeless youth and families in the nation’s capital since 1974.

www.sashabruce.org



THE ALI FORNEY CENTER

The Ali Forney Center “Dedicated to housing and transforming the lives of homeless LGBT youth”

www.aliformeycenter.org

NEWS



BRIGHT FUTURE
The future's so bright for The Trevor Project youth. Photo taken at LA Pride.
PHOTO: ERIC POLITZER

Lowering the risk of suicide among youth

Question: What do most successful LGBT youth have in common?
Answer: A loving and accepting support system.

The numbers are striking. LGBT youth are three to four times more likely to attempt suicide than their peers, according to recent research. Transgender youth, while less well studied, seem to show similarly high rates.

Why such disproportionate numbers?
Ann Haas, director of prevention projects at the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, says that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ)

youth encounter “a lot of negative messaging” about being LGBTQ. And while some youth have buffers against that—such as supportive families, other adults, or peers—others don’t. Those who have the added stresses of parents who reject them, peer pressures, or schools that do not respond to anti-LGBTQ behaviors, says Haas, may develop “real mental health problems,” including depression, anxiety, and a feeling of isolation. “Those are the kind of factors we know to be most potent in producing suicidal thinking and behavior.”

David McFarland, interim executive director/CEO of The Trevor Project, the leading national organization providing crisis inter-

vention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ youth, says, “It’s because they’re more often the victims of discrimination, bigotry, and rejection, which contributes to the isolation and depression which could lead to suicide.” Haas notes, however, that we still don’t know how many suicide attempts by LGBTQ youth result in death, because death certificates do not ask about sexual orientation or gender identity, something she hopes will change. Jody Huckaby, executive direc-

tor of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians And Gays (PFLAG), says that suicide prevention “first and foremost, starts with the family,” by teaching parents about the negative effects of parental rejection. We must also work with teachers and school officials, Huckaby says, to create safe learning environments for all students.

On the individual level, parents and teachers should be aware of warning signs such as sudden changes in behavior or a loss of interest in friends, studies, or other activities, say the experts above. If they suspect a person is thinking about suicide, McFarland advises, “they can connect the person to resources, be very supportive and listen, or help push them to a trusted adult they feel safe talking to.”

LGB youth are
3 to 4
times more likely to attempt suicide than their peers

SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCES FOR LGBT YOUTH

■ The Trevor Lifeline, a national, around-the-clock crisis and suicide prevention lifeline for LGBTQ youth: 866-4-U-TREVOR (866-488-7386)
■ TrevorChat, a free, confidential and secure online messaging service that provides live help: thetrevorproject.org/chat

■ GLBT National Youth Talkline, a program of the GLBT National Help Center: 1-800-246-PRIDE
youthtalkline.org
■ GLBT National Hotline, a program for people of all ages from the GLBT National Help Center: 1-888-843-4564 GLBTNational-

HelpCenter.org
■ Online Private One-to-One Peer-Counseling Chat: GLBTNationalHelpCenter.org/chat
■ The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, a free, 24-hour hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

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Sending a positive message: It Gets Better

In September 2010, syndicated columnist and author Dan Savage created a YouTube video with his partner Terry to inspire hope for young people facing harassment. In response to a number of students taking their own lives after being bullied in school, they wanted to create a personal way for supporters everywhere to tell LGBT youth that, yes, it does indeed get better.

Two months later, the It Gets Better Project turned into a worldwide movement, inspiring over 10,000 user-created videos viewed over 35 million times.

Why did you start the It Gets Better Project?

■ I had read this woman’s blog. This was just after that string of suicides by



Co-founders, It Gets Better Project, Dan Savage (right) and his partner, Terry Miller

gay youths in Minnesota, Indiana and Wisconsin. She said she wished she had gotten the chance to tell those kids, it gets better. I read that and thought: so true. If you want to help LGBT youth, you have to reach them in middle school and high school, when they’re being bullied.

With the Internet, I can reach them directly, before they give up

hope and kill themselves. Because when a 14-year-old kills himself, that is what he’s saying, that there’s no joy in the future that could compensate for this pain. You know, for so many gay kids, there are no gay role models in their lives, no examples of what a healthy, happy gay life looks like. I realized, we could provide them with that example.

What do people need to know about the It Gets Better Project?

■ That it is a true community project. LGBT youth need to know that a lot of straight kids are on their side—that more people are on their side than ever before. Sometimes LGBT youth think of straight kids as the enemy. We want to send the message that you

will meet great straight people, and that as you grow older, the straight people who are in your life—parents, siblings, friends—they’ll also get better and more supportive.

What advice do you have for readers?

■ I think the best thing for you to do is just live your life. Live a life that’s worth living, one where you do what you want to do, pursue your passions. That way, if you meet someone, they’ll be joining a life that’s already really good. And if you don’t meet anyone, you can still look back at the end and say, “You know what: I lived a really great life.”

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



Stanley Vance, MD
Pediatric Resident at University of California, San Francisco

Stanley Vance was raised in a single-parent home in Houston, MS. Growing up, he feared grappling with his sexual identity would further burden his family and estrange him from his church. When he did come out at 19, he had to leave his religious community. Stanley left home at 15 to attend a residential high school for gifted students. Later, he attended Rhodes College on full academic scholarship, graduating with honors, summa cum laude, and the Phi Beta Kappa Prize of his class. Now a 3rd year at Harvard Medical School, he is focused particularly on health disparities in the LGBT community and hopes to address those issues through medical school curriculum reform.

Did you have a mentor growing up?

I come from a small town in Mississippi where the old saying “it takes a village” rang true for my personal development. Specifically, I was very involved in the black Baptist Church, where I eventually became a leader in the youth community with the mentorship of my Sunday school teachers, pastor, and youth group ministers. My church gave me the confidence to believe I could go anywhere and be anything I wanted to be, and it kept me out of the trouble many of my peers were getting into.

What is the biggest obstacle you have had to overcome?

Although my church provided me with support, it also insidiously engrained in me feelings of self-hatred about my sexuality. After leaving that church, my journey of self-acceptance has been paralleled with the journey of finding my way back to God. Although I am farther along on these journeys, I still have a distance to go.

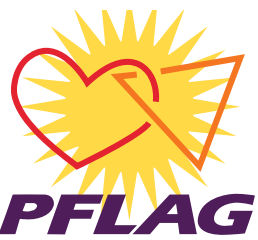
How has Point Foundation helped you achieve your goals thus far?

Point Foundation provided me with scholarship funds for my Harvard Medical School tuition, thereby helping me achieve my lifelong dream of being a doctor. The sense of community that I developed with my co-scholars has strengthened my interest in advocating healthcare for LGBT youth as a pediatrician after I complete my training at UCSF.

What message do you have for other LGBT youth?

Start accepting yourself for who you are now. Your sexuality does not have to limit how far you can go professionally or limit how fulfilled your interpersonal life can be. If you do see those limitations, get mad and fight those injustices for yourself and the community.

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PFLAG - with 350 chapters and 35+ years of experience - is the leading parent, family and ally organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.

www.pflag.org



Out & Equal Workplace Advocates is committed to ending workplace discrimination for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees.

www.OutandEqual.org



The Hetrick-Martin Institute creates a safe and supportive environment in which LGBTQ youth, ages 12 to 24, can reach their full potential.

www.hmi.org



Understanding and preventing suicide through research, education and advocacy. LGBT suicide prevention is an AFSP priority.

www.afsp.org



Campus Pride is the leading national organization building future leaders & creating safer, more LGBT-friendly colleges & universities. It exists to give “voice and action” to LGBT youth.

www.CampusPride.org



TIPS

There are as many kinds of straight allies as there are colors of the Pride flag. But figuring out how to be a straight supporter of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community isn't always easy. The good news is that getting started is easier than you think. Here are a few ways to become straight for equality for all:

Assume nothing

1 Next time you meet someone new, don't assume they are straight or gay. This will put you in a position to rethink conversations and words you choose.

Use inclusive language

2 Now that you're not assuming anything, using language that's inclusive of all people's lives naturally follows. Using terms like "partner" or "spouse" over "husband" or "wife" not only leave the conversation open, but will be perceived by many LGBT people as an active choice to be supportive.

Come out as an ally

3 At work, join your LGBT employee resource group, at home talk about the topic of equality with your family. The visible presence of out straight allies shows more than anything else that equality is an issue for us all.

For more tips on how to be an ally, visit www.straightforequality.org.

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DID YOU KNOW?

The dream market

A large percentage of gay consumers are affluent, educated and loyal. Billions of dollars are spent by marketers to reach gay consumers. In 2010, for the first time ever, the U.S. Census Bureau counted same-sex couples who identified themselves as married, even in states where gay marriage is illegal. This allowed marketers to figure out where the biggest pockets of gay consumers, are how they live and where to target them.

The LGBT community was branded a "dream market" in a 1991 Wall Street Journal article. It has lived up to that moniker. The gay market is estimated to be a \$743 billion market today. The gay community is a coveted demographic that can't be ignored, which is why many major marketers now compete for the attention of this 16 million person segment.

Gays and lesbians are often trendsetters; successfully marketing new products and services to them can often help marketers gain entrance into larger, more mainstream markets.

Facts

■ About two-thirds (65 percent) of all LGBT adults reported that they would be very loyal or somewhat likely to remain loyal to a brand they believed to be very friendly and supportive of the LGBT community—even when less friendly companies may offer lower prices or be more convenient.

■ Gays and lesbians are more likely to ask for a specific brand when ordering alcoholic beverages (60 percent) compared to 42 percent of heterosexuals.

■ Because only 21 percent of same-sex couples have children in the household, LGBT consumers have more discretionary income to spend than the average American family.

Source: Harris Interactive/Witeck-Combs Communications Survey



LAURENCE BOSCHETTO. CEO and president of Draftfcb, one of the world's largest ad agencies with 9,200 employees spanning 99 countries worldwide, is passionately committed to lending his voice to anti-bullying efforts far and wide.

PHOTO: JEFFREY UFERBERG

Workplace diversity starts at the top

There are many titles that can be used to describe Laurence Boschetto—CEO, white, Italian, gay. But those are just words, and the man behind them has a lot to say about how they are used to define him.

He speaks now with confidence and wisdom that comes with maturity, but it wasn't always easy to be so sure of himself. As a boy, Laurence, like many young people, was bullied. Coming from a very large Italian/Catholic family, early on his grandmother taught him that you should "never let anybody push you around."

The very first day of kindergarten, his mother proudly dressed Laurence in blue shorts, blue blazer, white shirt, bow tie, blue knee socks, and black shoes. In those days, kids walked home. So at 11:30 when class was dismissed, Laurence headed back to his house by himself. When he reached the playground, there were about five 4th-graders waiting to beat him up. They called him names, and he didn't understand what they meant, but he knew they were bad. When he finally made it home, he immediately went to his room and cut up the shorts and blazer he had worn. He was five years old.

"I learned really early that names sting, that the world is not fair, and that kids who are categorized as 'different' are always on high alert to protect and survive." He was determined to never be hit again.

It took him years to find his own voice, and he credits his supportive family—especially his mother, Tootsie—for his ability to achieve so much success personally and professionally. Initially, they never actually discussed the fact the Laurence was gay, but regardless, he always felt accepted. Parents play a crucial role in a child's upbringing, making them

"I strongly believe in the principles of this country which are about giving everybody the same level of respect and dignity regardless of their race or religion or gender or sexuality. I believe in inclusiveness. Period."

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feel either loved or rejected, embraced or pushed aside. He recognizes that not everybody is as fortunate to have such a positive support system, which includes a 15-year relationship with his partner Steven, who "keeps me grounded, focused, and makes me a better human being."

It was always important for Laurence to work for a company that was equally supportive, allowing him to make change and be himself in the process. Interpublic Group (Draftfcb's parent company) gave him that opportunity. When asked if he likes being the guy in charge, he responded, "The more responsibility you have, the greater obligations you have to really be the live, walking, talking demonstration of everything that you say and you espouse to be."

Dignified intolerance

There was one incident that he can recall when he was told that he would not be able to reach a certain level of professional achievement due to his sexual orientation. He responded with, what he calls, "dignified intolerance." Now, if he feels there is any kind of foul play, he will call it out immediately, not just for himself, but for anybody that he thinks is being prejudiced or biased against. "Once I recognized I loved what I was doing and who I was working with and that I could make a positive difference, it was never going to be ok settling for runner-up."

"When people ask, 'What's it like being a gay man in business?' I take offense to that because I'm a man. Defining me by characteristics I was given at birth—like being Italian, Catholic and gay—is so limiting. They do not capture the essence of who I am as an individual. They are refinements to who I am—not definitions."

In his personal life, Laurence is on the board of the Coalition for the Homeless. Although his philanthropic efforts are both diverse and extensive, this particular cause caught his attention once he realized that about a quarter of all homeless people are gay and about another quarter of them are youth. For youth, "We need to be able to create an opportunity in the world, where they are genuinely appreciated and respected for their talents and contributions. And they should have the same goals for their lives as any other kid."

Men and women like Laurence who are gay or straight and speaking out about taking charge of their lives, regardless of prejudices, are inspiring millions to speak out about their true selves. Laurence reflects, "I strongly believe in the principles of this country which are about giving everybody the same level of respect and dignity regardless of their race or religion or gender or sexuality. I believe in inclusiveness. Period."

MANDY LYNN

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Guidelines for allies, families and friends

Your first reaction to learning that your loved one is lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning can range anywhere from anger to sadness, fear to hurt, confusion to grief, and anywhere and everything in between.

These emotions, and the thousands of others that parents, families, and friends experience are normal as they navigate their loved ones coming out process.

I can tell you with absolute certainty that you're not alone. According to statistics, one in every ten people in this country and around the world is lesbian, gay, bisexual or



Jody M. Huckaby,
Executive Director,
PFLAG National

transgender (LGBT). Approximately one in four families has an immediate family member who is LGBT, and most people have at least one LGBT individual in their extended circle of friends and family.

The first thing you should do for yourself and your loved one is to talk to someone who has been through this process. Whether it is by e-mail, phone or in person, listening to and talking to others who have experienced the feelings you are encounter-

ing can be both cathartic and comforting.

The second thing you should do is educate yourself. The following are resources specific to family and friends of the LGBT community.

■ **PFLAG** (parents, families and friends of lesbians and gays): Our members are parents, families and friends of LGBT people and LGBT people themselves. As a member of PFLAG you are entitled to support, education and advocacy materials focused on helping you help your child or loved one. Visit pflag.org.

■ **The Family Acceptance Project:** The only community research, intervention, education and policy initiative that works to decrease major health and related risks LGBT

youth. Visit familyproject.sfsu.edu/home.

■ **The Safe Schools Coalition:** A public-private partnership in support of LGBT youth, that is working to help schools become safe places where every family can belong, where every educator can teach, and where every child can learn, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. Visit safeschoolscoalition.org.

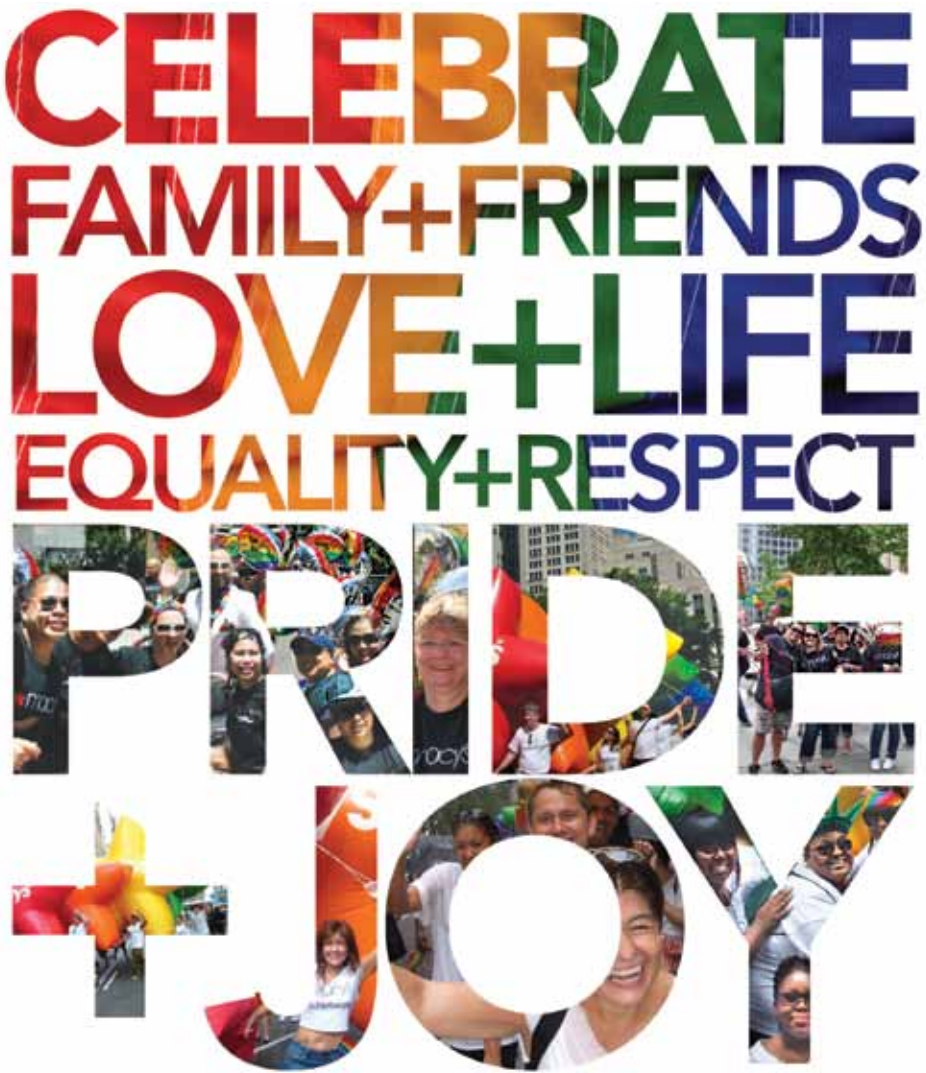
■ **Gender Spectrum:** Provides education, training and support to help create a gender sensitive and inclusive environment for all children and teens. Visit genderspectrum.org.

JODY M. HUCKABY

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PANEL OF EXPERTS

	<div><div>Michelle Scales Director of Diverse Segments Wells Fargo Bank</div></div>	<div><div>Chuck Wolfe President & CEO Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund</div></div>	<div><div>Udi Behr Designer and Co-Founder Love and Pride</div></div>
Question 1: Why is it important for companies and organizations to dedicate specific resources to the LGBT community?	As a financial services company serving increasingly diverse customers, our support for the LGBT community is part of our broader commitment to diversity and fundamental to our continued success. We recognize the buying power of the LGBT community and the importance of providing specialized services for our LGBT customers. We strive to build a culture where our customers and our 275,000 team members feel accepted and respected.	Americans strive to live up to the founding principle that all are created equal and deserve liberty. Today most of us have close friends, coworkers or loved ones who are openly lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, and clear majorities believe they deserve to be treated fairly by their government. Supporting us in our fight for fairness and freedom is the next step in moving our country toward a more perfect union.	The LGBT community continues to openly suffer from discrimination; for them to not share in same civil liberties is absolutely a crime against human rights. The LGBT community is very active and is doing so much to make change, but it should not have to do this alone—companies and organizations have great visibility across many demographics and can reach new outlets by donating an array of resources - time, information and funding.
Question 2: Why are LGBT youth more at risk than other demographics of our youth?	Bullying is an issue that impacts students of all ages in the K-12 educational environment; however, because many kids (and adults, too) do not fully understand sexual orientation and gender identity, LGBT youth are at greater risk for bullying. It is important that students believe their schools to be safe, nurturing places where ethnic, color, gender/gender identity, religious and sexual orientation differences are embraced. Investing in our students today is a down-payment to ensure we have an inclusive workforce and society tomorrow.	In too many places the open bigotry of some adults leads to more difficult environments for LGBT youth. Their safety is frankly more important than the political views of a few ideologues, so it should be a national priority to protect kids at risk. Electing openly LGBT officials at all levels of government means these kids will have role models and understand they can live authentic lives and still succeed.	There is general lack of support for LGBT youth, unlike other demographics—it is hard enough to be a young person; carrying the burden of educating the world around you and fighting for acceptance is tremendous.
Question 3: How can readers get involved and make a difference?	The Safe Schools movement offers many ways to become involved, including supporting GLSEN's Safe Space Campaign, a national effort to place a Safe Space Kit in every middle school and high school in the United States. Wells Fargo's support of the three-year campaign has enabled GLSEN to reach more than 75,000 schools, serving 25 million students.	At-risk LGBT youth need to know they have a future. Openly LGBT elected officials are an important part of making life safer for young people who are coming to terms with their sexual orientation or gender identity. I would invite everyone to help the Victory Fund support candidates who are making a difference—people like Fort Worth City Councilman Joel Burns, Houston Mayor Annise Parker and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin.	Raising awareness is vital —I launched Love and Pride as a vehicle for this visibility and change. Since 2005 we have donated a portion of our proceeds to incredible organizations that fight for equal rights. Anyone can make an impact in this fight for equality. Readers can donate time, talk to people, stay informed of new legislation and opportunities to speak out, and overall just stay focused on the end goal of equality and human rights.



FROM OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, TO OUR COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS. MACY'S IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE LGBT COMMUNITY. PRIDE + JOY. WE THINK IT'S REALLY SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE.



Proudly recognized by The Trevor Project for our commitment to the LGBT community and by the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index with a 100% rating.





The model in this image is for illustrative purposes only.

Never forget we're all more than one LABEL.

Fact is, no single label ever defines any of us. DRAFTFCB