



The Convention on the Rights of the Child says...

CRC Article 2 – Freedom from Discrimination

CRC Article 3 – Protection of Best Interests

CRC Article 8 – Preservation of Identity

CRC Article 15 – Freedom of Association

CRC Article 16 – Freedom of Privacy

CRC Article 19 – Freedom from Abuse and Neglect

CRC Article 34 – Protection from Sexual Exploitation

Key Questions

- What kind of discrimination do LGBT youth encounter?
- How does this discrimination affect day-to-day lives?
- What current laws address discrimination against LGBT youth?
- What actions can we take to improve this situation?

Facts and Figures

- There are approximately 2 million LGBT youth in the US.
- LGBT youth are subjected to abuse on a daily basis by their peers and in some cases by teachers or school administrators.
- Federal government has failed to provide protection from violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- There is little to no accountability in most states if school officials fail to protect students from discrimination because of sexual orientation or gender identity and this means that these students either suffer the harassment and discrimination or drop out of school.
- LGBT students are being sent a message that harassment is an inevitable consequence of being gay.
- Recent suicides in the summer and fall of 2010 have given this issue center stage.

Legislation

- **Nondiscrimination in Education (California Education Code, section 220)** – No person shall be subjected to discrimination on basis of disability, gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.
- **Prohibition of Hate Crimes (California Penal Code, section 422.6)** — Provides it is a misdemeanor to interfere by force or threat of force with a person's state or federal statutory or constitutional rights because of his or her race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

HRW Recommendations

- All school districts should review nondiscrimination policies, and their effectiveness, for inclusion of protection based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- State legislatures should enact legislation to protect students from harassment and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- U.S. Department of Education should monitor school districts' compliance with nondiscrimination policies and intervene when policies are failing.

Tent Activities/Outfitting Ideas:

- Have students sign a pledge against bullying
- Create "Safe Space" signs for teachers to post in classrooms
- News articles about recent LGBT suicides.

Further Resources

[Hatred in the Hallways Report](#) (HRW 2001)

[2009 National School Climate Survey and Report](#)

[“It Gets Better”](#) YouTube Campaign

[The Trevor Project](#), 24/7 LGBT Hotline

[City Councilman Joel Burns’ “It gets better testimony”](#)

[Court date set in New York City anti-gay beatings](#) – Associated Press October 14, 2010

[New York gang members arrested in anti-gay beatings](#) – LA Times October 9, 2010

[Suicides Put Light on Pressures of Gay Teenagers](#) – NY Times October 3, 2010