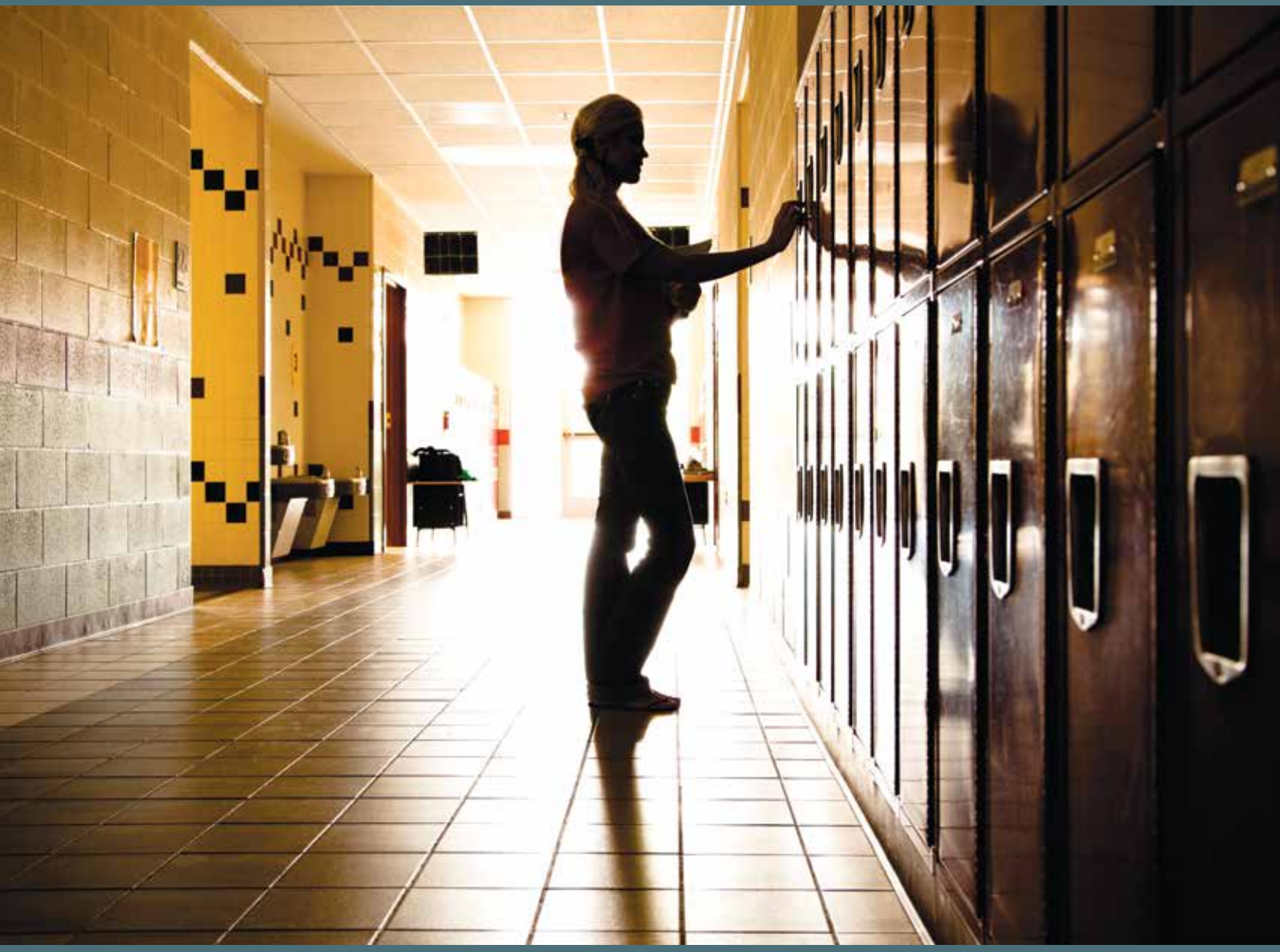
GLSEN®

The 2013 National School Climate Survey

The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools



A Report from the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network

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GLSEN®

The 2013 National School Climate Survey

The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools

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ISBN 978-1-934092-13-2

When referencing this document, we recommend the following citation:
Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Palmer, N. A., & Boesen, M. J. (2014). *The 2013 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth in our nation's schools*. New York: GLSEN.

GLSEN (the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network) is the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students. Established in 1990, GLSEN envisions a world in which every child learns to respect and accept all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. GLSEN seeks to develop school climates where difference is valued for the positive contribution it makes to creating a more vibrant and diverse community. For more information on our educator resources, research, public policy agenda, student leadership programs, or development initiatives, visit www.glsen.org.

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Quotes throughout are from students' responses to open-ended questions in the survey.

Electronic versions of this report and all other GLSEN research reports are available at www.glsen.org/research.

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PREFACE

Ever try finding your way out of the trackless woods without GPS?

Nearly 25 years ago, GLSEN's founding volunteers set out on a journey in uncharted territory that many said was impossible, and most preferred we not even talk about. Firmly rooted in the school experience—as teachers and students and parents themselves—they knew that something had to change. The ways that anti-LGBT bias and violence shaped daily life in school, whether or not any LGBT people were even out in the school community, was simply unacceptable.

At the time, homosexuality itself was still illegal in a number of states, something that would not change for another 13 years. And many denied that there was even such a thing as "LGBT youth"—no one, the reasoning went, "became gay" until they were older. (And the "T" wasn't even in the picture yet.)

Step by step, a networked community of education professionals and students, and those who cared about them, began to come together to speak out and reach out, to raise awareness of the issues and begin planting the seeds of change in school practice, policy, and climate.

And the momentum grew. Sometimes the spark came from a student's unlikely triumph, like that of Kelly Peterson who fought to start and keep a Gay-Straight Alliance in her Salt Lake City high school in 1995. Sometimes we were spurred on by tragedy, as happened in the aftermath of Matthew Shepard's murder in 1998. Always, we were face-to-face with the enormity of the system we seek to transform, and haunted by the sky-high cost of failure.

Promising directions and best practices began to emerge. In the face of fierce resistance that only mounted as we gained a toehold, we knew we needed some way to show potential allies the scope of the problem and its urgent relevance for schools. And for ourselves, we needed some way to assess our choices and potential directions.

We launched GLSEN's National School Climate Survey (NSCS) in 1999 to create our own roadmap in the absence of any national data on LGBT youth experiences in schools. To this day, GLSEN's NSCS remains the only source of its kind, providing a national picture of the scope and impact of anti-LGBT bias and violence in our schools, and a sense of the interventions that will help us all.

Over time, GLSEN and our amazing allies and partner organizations across the country and around the world have learned from the voices of youth expressed via the biennial GLSEN National School Climate Survey report. Their experiences and reports of school conditions have guided the Safe Schools Movement as we have collectively sought a way out of the wilderness.

And as the terrain changes, GLSEN's NSCS allows us to suss out the contours of the changing conditions. This newest report shows us accelerating progress in ending the daily victimization that is the most fundamental barrier LGBT youth face in schools. It also calls our attention to areas we have only begun to understand, such as entrenched, systemic discrimination against LGBT students that can often lead to these students being pushed out of school. And it shines a light on the dramatic power of curricular inclusion to open new fields of inquiry and career possibilities for LGBT youth.

Next year, GLSEN will celebrate 25 years since those first volunteers came together. One of our founders once told me, "I saw a student walking across campus with a pink triangle on one day. I wasn't out myself, as a teacher there. If she could face the day at school being out, what was wrong with me? I realized that I owed it to her, and I owed it to myself, to stand up."

Indeed, the voices of today's students reflected in this report and in our everyday work at GLSEN continue to guide us and motivate us. They tell us how far we have come, what's working and where we still need to ramp up our efforts. We're not out of the woods yet, but all of us working together are finding the way.

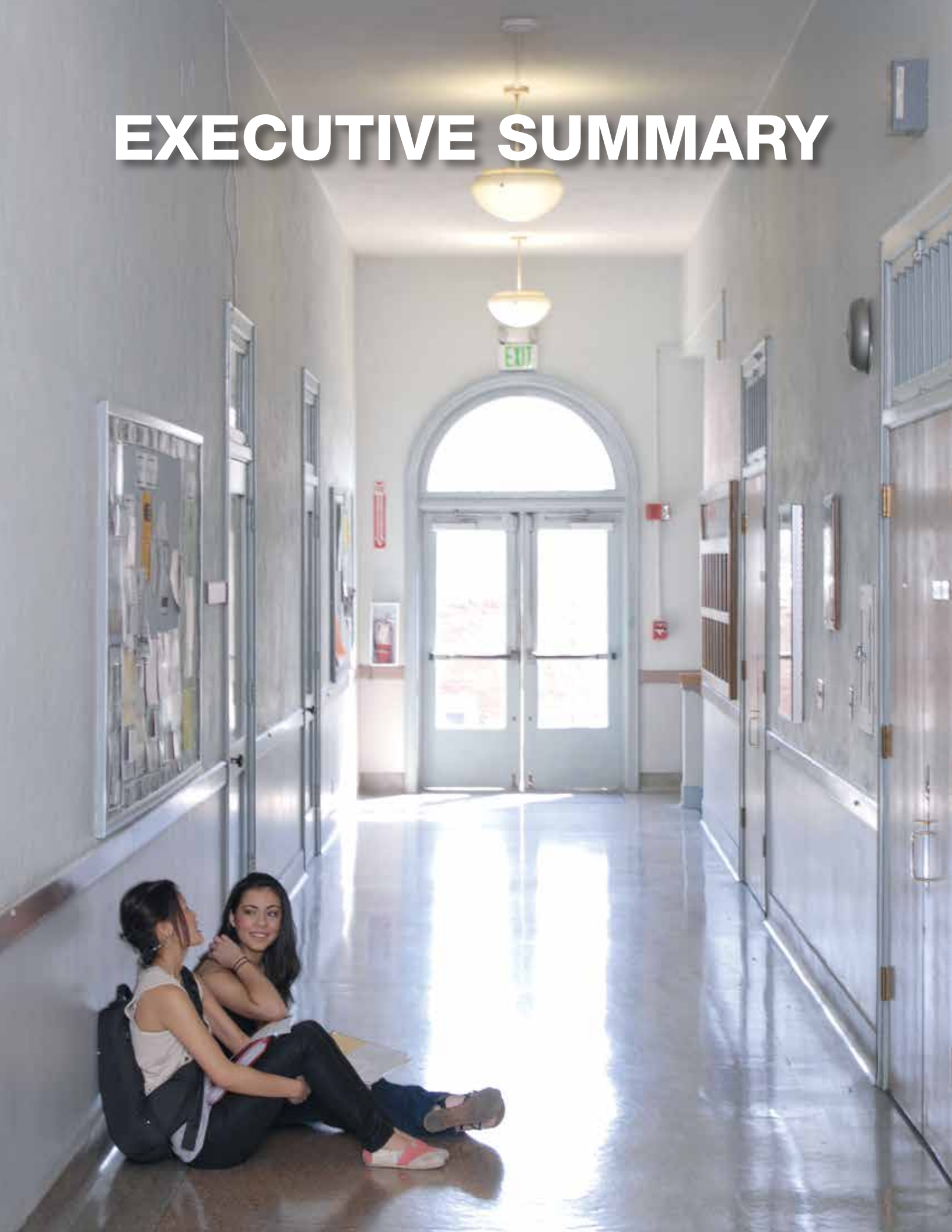
Eliza Byard, Ph.D.
Executive Director
GLSEN

Acknowledgements

The authors would first like to thank Wells Fargo for their generous support of the National School Climate Survey.

The authors also wish to thank the youth who participated in our survey for enlightening us about their experiences in school. We also wish to acknowledge the organizations that assisted with disseminating information about the survey online, including LGBT youth services and programs that invited their constituents to participate in the survey and GLSEN's Chapters. We are grateful to former Research Interns, Jordan Silverman, for editing and proofreading, and Thomas Bricco, for assistance with coding; and to former Summer Research Fellow, Ev Evnen, for assistance with survey promotion. We are also indebted to Ryan Kull, Research Consultant, for his input on the survey and his assistance with editing and proofreading, and to former Research Assistant, Mark Bartkiewicz, for help with development of the survey and promotional materials. Finally, much gratitude goes to Eliza Byard, GLSEN's Executive Director, for her feedback and commentary throughout the project and for her profound support of GLSEN Research.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



ABOUT THE SURVEY

In 1999, GLSEN identified that little was known about the school experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth and that LGBT youth were nearly absent from national studies of adolescents. We responded to this national need for data by launching the first National School Climate survey, and we continue to meet this continued need for current data by conducting the study every two years. Since then, the biennial National School Climate Survey has documented the unique challenges LGBT students face and identified interventions that can improve school climate. The survey documents the prevalence of anti-LGBT language and victimization, such as experiences of harassment and assault in school. In addition, the survey examines school policies and practices that may contribute to negative experiences for LGBT students and make them feel as if they are not valued by their school communities. The survey also explores the effects that a hostile school climate may have on LGBT students' educational outcomes and well-being. Finally, the survey reports on the availability and the utility of LGBT-related school resources and supports that may offset the negative effects of a hostile school climate and promote a positive learning experience. In addition to collecting this critical data every two years, we also add and adapt survey questions to respond to the changing world for LGBT youth. For example, in the 2013 survey we added a question about hearing negative remarks about transgender people (e.g., "tranny"). The National School Climate Survey remains one of the few studies to examine the school experiences of LGBT students nationally, and its results have been vital to GLSEN's understanding of the issues that LGBT students face, thereby informing our ongoing work to ensure safe and affirming schools for all.

In our 2013 survey, we examine the experiences of LGBT students with regard to indicators of negative school climate:

- Hearing biased remarks, including homophobic remarks, in school;
- Feeling unsafe in school because of personal characteristics, such as sexual orientation, gender expression, or race/ethnicity;
- Missing classes or days of school because of safety reasons;
- Experiencing harassment and assault in school; and
- Experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school.

We also examine:

- The possible negative effects of a hostile school climate on LGBT students' academic achievement, educational aspirations, and psychological well-being;
- Whether or not students report experiences of victimization to school officials or to family members and how these adults address the problem; and
- How the school experiences of LGBT students differ by personal and community characteristics.

In addition, we demonstrate the degree to which LGBT students have access to supportive resources in school, and we explore the possible benefits of these resources:

- Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) or similar clubs;
- School anti-bullying/harassment policies;
- Supportive school staff; and

- Curricula that are inclusive of LGBT-related topics.

Given that GLSEN has been conducting the survey for over a decade, we also examine changes over time on indicators of negative school climate and levels of access to LGBT-related resources in schools.

METHODS

The 2013 National School Climate Survey was conducted online. To obtain a representative national sample of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth, we conducted outreach through national, regional, and local organizations that provide services to or advocate on behalf of LGBT youth, and conducted targeted advertising on the social networking sites, such as Facebook and Reddit. To ensure representation of transgender youth, youth of color, and youth in rural communities, we made special efforts to notify groups and organizations that work predominantly with these populations.

The final sample consisted of a total of 7,898 students between the ages of 13 and 21. Students were from all 50 states and the District of Columbia and from 2,770 unique school districts. About two thirds of the sample (68.1%) was White, slightly less than half (43.6%) was cisgender female, and over half identified as gay or lesbian (58.8%). Students were in grades 6 to 12, with the largest numbers in grades 10 and 11.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Hostile School Climate

Schools nationwide are hostile environments for a distressing number of LGBT students, the overwhelming majority of whom routinely hear anti-LGBT language and experience victimization and discrimination at school. As a result, many LGBT students avoid school activities or miss school entirely.

School Safety

- 55.5% of LGBT students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, and 37.8% because of their gender expression.
- 30.3% of LGBT students missed at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and over a tenth (10.6%) missed four or more days in the past month.
- Over a third avoided gender-segregated spaces in school because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (bathrooms: 35.4%, locker rooms: 35.3%).
- Most reported avoiding school functions and extracurricular activities (68.1% and 61.2%, respectively) because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

Anti-LGBT Remarks at School

- 71.4% of LGBT students heard "gay" used in a negative way (e.g., "that's so gay") frequently or often at school, and 90.8% reported that they felt distressed because of this language.
- 64.5% heard other homophobic remarks (e.g., "dyke" or "faggot") frequently or often.
- 56.4% heard negative remarks about gender expression (not acting "masculine enough" or "feminine enough") frequently or often.

- A third (33.1%) heard negative remarks specifically about transgender people, like "tranny" or "he/she," frequently or often.

- 51.4% of students reported hearing homophobic remarks from their teachers or other school staff, and 55.5% of students reported hearing negative remarks about gender expression from teachers or other school staff.

Harassment and Assault at School

- 74.1% of LGBT students were verbally harassed (e.g., called names or threatened) in the past year because of their sexual orientation and 55.2% because of their gender expression.

- 36.2% were physically harassed (e.g., pushed or shoved) in the past year because of their sexual orientation and 22.7% because of their gender expression.

- 16.5% were physically assaulted (e.g., punched, kicked, injured with a weapon) in the past year because of their sexual orientation and 11.4% because of their gender expression.

- 49.0% of LGBT students experienced electronic harassment in the past year (e.g., via text messages or postings on Facebook), often known as cyberbullying.

- 56.7% of LGBT students who were harassed or assaulted in school did not report the incident to school staff, most commonly because they doubted that effective intervention would occur or the situation could become worse if reported.

- 61.6% of the students who did report an incident said that school staff did nothing in response.

Discriminatory School Policies and Practices

- 55.5% of LGBT students reported personally experiencing any LGBT-related discriminatory policies or practices at school (see below), and almost two thirds (65.2%) said other students had experienced these policies and practices at school.

- 28.2% of students reported being disciplined for public displays of affection that were not disciplined among non-LGBT students.

- 18.1% of students were prevented from attending a dance or function with someone of the same gender.

- 17.8% of students were restricted from forming or promoting a GSA.

- 17.5% of students were prohibited from discussing or writing about LGBT topics in school assignments.

- 15.5% of students were prevented from wearing clothing or items supporting LGBT issues 9.2% of students reported being disciplined for simply identifying as LGBT.

- Some policies particularly targeted transgender students:

    - 42.2% of transgender students had been prevented from using their preferred name (10.8% of LGBT students overall);

- 59.2% of transgender students had been required to use a bathroom or locker room of their legal sex (18.7% of students overall); and

- 31.6% of transgender students had been prevented from wearing clothes considered inappropriate based on their legal sex (19.2% of students overall).

Effects of a Hostile School Climate

A hostile school climate affects students' academic success and mental health. LGBT students who experience victimization and discrimination at school have worse educational outcomes and poorer psychological well-being.

Effects of Victimization

- LGBT students who experienced higher levels of victimization because of their sexual orientation:

    - Were more than three times as likely to have missed school in the past month than those who experienced lower levels (61.1% vs. 17.3%);

    - Had lower grade point averages (GPAs) than students who were less often harassed (2.8 vs. 3.3);

    - Were twice as likely to report that they did not plan to pursue any post-secondary education (e.g., college or trade school) than those who experienced lower levels (8.7% vs. 4.2%); and

    - Had higher levels of depression and lower levels of self-esteem.

- LGBT students who experienced higher levels of victimization because of their gender expression:

    - Were more than three times as likely to have missed school in the past month than those who experienced lower levels (58.6% vs. 18.2%);

    - had lower GPAs than students who were less often harassed (2.9 vs. 3.3);

    - Were twice as likely to report that they did not plan to pursue any post-secondary education (e.g., college or trade school; 8.2% vs. 4.2%); and

    - Had higher levels of depression and lower levels of self-esteem.

Effects of Discrimination

- LGBT students who experienced LGBT-related discrimination at school were:

    - More than three times as likely to have missed school in the past month as those who had not (42.3% vs. 13.8%);

    - Had lower GPAs than their peers (3.0 vs. 3.3); and

    - Had lower self-esteem and higher levels of depression.

LGBT-Related School Resources and Supports

Students who feel safe and affirmed have better educational outcomes. LGBT students who have LGBT-related school resources report better school experiences and academic success. Unfortunately, all too many schools fail to provide these critical resources.

Gay-Straight Alliances

Availability and Participation

- Only half (50.3%) of students said that their school had a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or similar student club.
- Although most LGBT students reported participating in their GSA at some level, almost a third (32.3%) had not.

Utility

- Compared to LGBT students who did not have a GSA in their school, students who had a GSA in their school:
    - Were less likely to hear "gay" used in a negative way often or frequently (67.2% compared to 81.1% of other students);
    - Were less likely to hear homophobic remarks such as "fag" or "dyke" often or frequently (57.4% vs. 71.6%);
    - Were less likely to hear negative remarks about gender expression often or frequently (53.0% vs. 59.6%);
    - Were more likely to report that school personnel intervened when hearing homophobic remarks — 20.8% vs. 12.7% said that staff intervene most of the time or always;
    - Were less likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation (46.0% vs. 64.4%);
    - Experienced lower levels of victimization related to their sexual orientation and gender expression. For example, 19.0% of students with a GSA experienced higher levels of victimization based on their sexual orientation, compared to 36.2% of those without a GSA; and
    - Felt more connected to their school community.

Inclusive Curricular Resources

Availability

- Only 18.5% of LGBT students were taught positive representations about LGBT people, history, or events in their schools; 14.8% had been taught negative content about LGBT topics.
- Less than half (44.2%) of students reported that they could find information about LGBT-related issues in their school library.

- Less than half of students (45.3%) with Internet access at school reported being able to access LGBT-related information online via school computers.

Utility

- LGBT students in schools with an LGBT- inclusive curriculum:
    - Were less likely to hear "gay" used in a negative way often or frequently (54.7% compared to 78.5% of other students);
    - Were less likely to hear homophobic remarks such as "fag" or "dyke" often or frequently (46.3% vs. 68.7%);
    - Were less likely to hear negative remarks about gender expression often or frequently (43.5% vs. 59.2%);
    - Were less likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation (34.8% vs. 59.8%);
    - Were less likely to miss school in the past month (16.7% of students with an inclusive curriculum missed school in past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable compared to 32.9% of other students);
    - Were more likely to report that their classmates were somewhat or very accepting of LGBT people (75.2% vs. 39.6%); and
    - Felt more connected to their school community.
- LGBT high school seniors were more likely to be interested in studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math) or Social Science in college if their relevant high school classes had included positive LGBT content (35.8% vs. 18.5% for STEM majors; 29.0 vs. 19.7% for Social Science majors).

Supportive Educators

Availability

- Almost all LGBT students (96.1%) could identify at least one staff member supportive of LGBT students at their school.
- Less than two thirds of students (61.0%) could identify at least six supportive school staff.
- Only 38.7% of students could identify 11 or more supportive staff.
- Over a quarter (26.1%) of students had seen at least one Safe Space sticker or poster at their school (these stickers or posters often serve to identify supportive educators).

Utility

- LGBT students with many (11 or more) supportive staff at their school:
    - Were less likely to feel unsafe than students with no supportive staff. (36.3 % vs. 74.1%);
    - Were less likely to miss school because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (14.7% vs. 50.0%);

- Felt more connected to their school community;
- Had higher GPAs than other students (3.3 vs. 2.8); and
- Were less likely to say they did not plan to attend college (3.0% vs. 12.0%).

- Students who had seen a Safe Space sticker or poster in their school were more likely to identify school staff who were supportive of LGBT students and more likely to feel comfortable talking with school staff about LGBT issues.

Comprehensive Bullying/Harassment Policies

Availability

- Although a majority (82.1%) of students had an anti-bullying policy at their school, only 10.1% of students reported that their school had a comprehensive policy (i.e., that specifically enumerate both sexual orientation and gender identity/expression).

Utility

- Students in schools with a comprehensive policy:
  - Were less likely to hear "gay" used in a negative way often or frequently (59.2% compared to 77.1% of students with a generic policy and 80.2% of students with no policy);
  - Were less likely to hear homophobic remarks such as "fag" or "dyke" often or frequently (50.4% compared to 66.4% of students with a generic policy and 72.4% of students with no policy);
  - Were less likely to hear negative remarks about gender expression often or frequently (41.7% compared to 57.6% of students with a generic policy and 62.3% of students with no policy); and
  - Were more likely to report that staff intervene when hearing homophobic remarks.

Changes in School Climate for LGBT Youth Over Time

School climate for LGBT students has improved somewhat over the years, yet remains quite hostile for many. Increases in the availability of many LGBT-related school resources may be having a positive effect on the school environment.

Changes in Indicators of Hostile School Climate

Anti-LGBT Remarks

- LGBT students in the 2013 survey reported a lower incidence of homophobic remarks than in all prior years. The percentage of students hearing these remarks frequently or often has dropped from over 80% in 2001 to about 60% in 2013.
- Although the expression "that's so gay" remains the most common form of anti-LGBT language heard by LGBT students, its prevalence has declined consistently since 2001.
- In 2013 the prevalence of hearing negative remarks about gender expression was at its lowest levels.

Harassment and Assault

- LGBT students in the 2013 survey experienced lower verbal and physical harassment based on sexual orientation than in all prior years, and lower physical assault based on sexual orientation since 2007.

- Changes in harassment and assault based on gender expression were similar to those for sexual orientation – verbal and physical harassment were lower than in all prior years of the survey, and physical assault has been decreasing since 2007.

Changes in Availability of LGBT-Related School Resources and Supports

Gay-Straight Alliances

- The percentage of LGBT students reporting that they have a GSA in their school was higher in 2013 than in all prior survey years.

Curricular Resources

- The percentage of LGBT students reporting positive representations of LGBT people, history, or events in their curriculum was significantly higher in 2013 than in all prior survey years.

- The percentage of students with access to LGBT-related Internet resources was higher in 2013 than in all prior survey years.

- More students also had access to LGBT-related content in their textbooks than in all prior survey years.

- The percentage of students with LGBT-related resources in their school library has not changed noticeably in recent survey years.

Supportive Educators

- A higher percentage of LGBT students reported having supportive school staff in 2013 than in all prior survey years.

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policies

- More LGBT students reported having an anti-bullying/harassment policy at their school in 2013 than in all prior survey years, including a modest increase in the percentage of students reporting that their school had a comprehensive policy, i.e., one that included protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Demographic and School Characteristic Differences in LGBT Students' School Experiences

LGBT students are a diverse population, and although they share many similar experiences, their experiences in school vary based on their personal demographics, the kind of school they attend, and where they live.

Differences in LGBT Students' School Experiences by Personal Demographics

Race or Ethnicity

- Overall, Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students experienced the lowest frequencies of victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression.

- White/European American LGBT students experienced lower frequencies of victimization based on race/ethnicity than all LGBT youth of color groups.

Gender Identity

- Compared to other LGBT students, transgender, genderqueer, and other non-cisgender students faced the most hostile school climates.

- Cisgender female students experienced the lowest frequencies of anti-LGBT victimization.

Gender Nonconformity

- Gender nonconforming cisgender students (students whose gender expression did not align to traditional gender norms) experienced worse school climates compared to gender conforming cisgender students.

Differences in LGBT Students' School Experiences by School Characteristics

School Level

- LGBT students in middle school were more likely than students in high school to hear anti-LGBT language in school.

- Students in middle school reported higher frequencies of victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression than students in high school.

- Students in middle school were less likely to have access to each LGBT-related school resource: GSAs, supportive educators, inclusive curriculum, and comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policies; the disparity between middle and high school students was greatest for GSAs (7.5% for middle school students vs. 58.5% for high school students).

School Type

- LGBT students in private, non-religious schools were less likely to hear anti-LGBT biased language than students in other schools.

- Students in public schools experienced higher frequencies of victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression compared to students in private or religious schools.

- Overall, students in private schools had greater access to LGBT-related resources and supports in school than students in other schools.

Region

- Students in the Northeast and the West reported hearing "gay" used in a negative way less frequently than students in the South and the Midwest.

- Overall, LGBT students from schools in the Northeast and the West reported significantly lower levels of victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression than students from schools in the South and the Midwest.

- In general, students in the Northeast were most likely to report having LGBT-related resources at school, followed by students in the West. Students in the South were least likely to have access to these resources and supports.

School Locale

- Students in rural/small town schools reported the highest frequency of hearing anti-LGBT language at school.
- Students in rural/small town schools experienced higher frequencies of victimization in school based on sexual orientation and gender expression.
- Students in rural/small town schools were least likely to have LGBT-related school resources or supports, particularly GSAs and supportive school personnel.

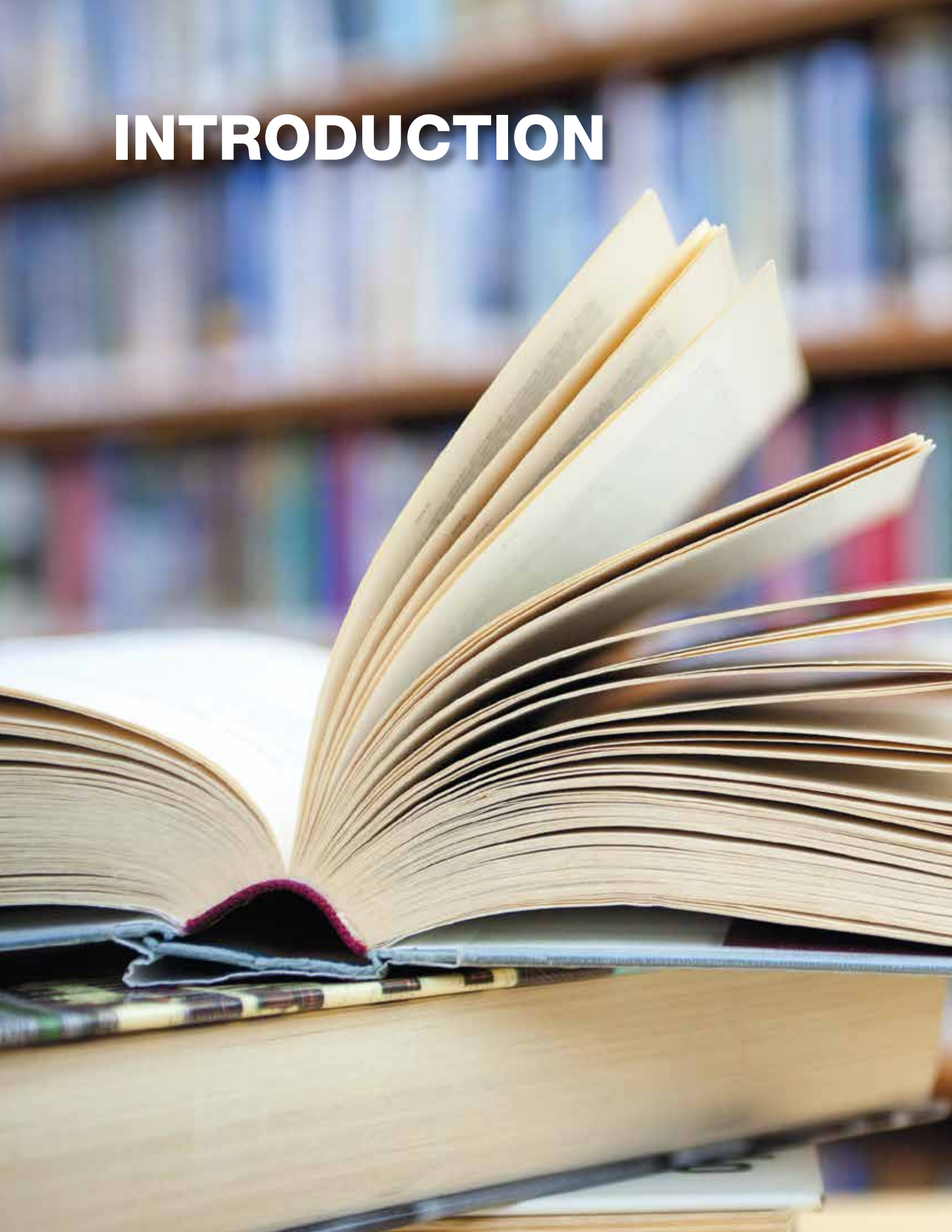
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear that there is an urgent need for action to create safe and affirming learning environments for LGBT students. Results from the 2013 National School Climate Survey demonstrate the ways in which school-based support – such as supportive staff, anti-bullying/harassment policies, curricular resources inclusive of LGBT people, and GSAs – can positively affect LGBT students' school experiences. Based on these findings, we recommend:

- Increasing student access to appropriate and accurate information regarding LGBT people, history, and events through inclusive curricula and library and Internet resources;
- Supporting student clubs, such as GSAs, that provide support for LGBT students and address LGBT issues in education;
- Providing professional development for school staff to improve rates of intervention and increase the number of supportive teachers and other staff available to students;
- Ensuring that school policies and practices, such as those related to dress codes and school dances, do not discriminate against LGBT students; and
- Adopting and implementing comprehensive bullying/harassment policies that specifically enumerate sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in individual schools and districts, with clear and effective systems for reporting and addressing incidents that students experience.

Taken together, such measures can move us toward a future in which all students have the opportunity to learn and succeed in school, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

INTRODUCTION



For nearly 25 years, GLSEN has worked to ensure safe schools for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. As part of our work, it has been important to document the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth in schools and raise awareness of the LGBT student experience among policymakers, educators, advocates, and the general public. Since 1999, we have conducted our biennial National School Climate Survey (NSCS), a national survey of LGBT middle and high school students, to assess the prevalence of anti-LGBT language and victimization, the effect that these experiences have on LGBT students' academic achievement, and the utility of interventions to both lessen the negative effects of a hostile climate and promote a positive educational experience. The results of the survey have been vital to GLSEN's understanding of the issues that LGBT students face, thereby informing our ongoing work to ensure safe and affirming schools for all. In each edition of the GLSEN National School Climate Survey, in addition to examining victimization and biased language, their effects, and the school resources and supports that can improve school climate, we document the changing educational landscape for LGBT students by exploring additional areas of focus in the survey. In the 2013 NSCS, specifically, we have expanded our examination of discriminatory policies and practices at school and added sections on post-secondary education plans, housing instability, and involvement with school disciplinary sanctions and the juvenile/criminal justice system pertaining to the school-to-prison pipeline in order to illustrate some of the complex issues facing LGBT students today.

Since the release of our 2011 report, we have observed great strides regarding attention to LGBT student issues by the federal government. The U.S. Department of Education released official guidance stating that Title IX, a federal civil rights law prohibiting sex discrimination in federally funded education programs and activities, applies to discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression, thereby protecting transgender and gender nonconforming students from discrimination in nearly all U.S. schools.[1] However, the Department of Education has granted an exemption from these protections to religious education institutions; thus, some concerns remain about the extent of protections for transgender youth.[2] In line with this increased attention in federal policy, we have seen an increase in policies to provide transgender and gender nonconforming students with equal access to a safe and respectful education at the state and local level. For example, in 2013, California passed legislation guaranteeing transgender students the right to participate in school according to their gender identity as opposed to their sex assigned at birth.

This past year, the federal government also committed to LGBT-inclusive data collection in an unprecedented manner. The Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights has added specific questions about harassment and bullying based on sexual orientation to the Civil Rights Data Collection that all U.S. school districts are required to complete. In addition, the Department of Education has committed to adding LGBT-inclusive items into various other surveys,[3] and GLSEN has been leading a coalition of researchers and advocates to advise the Department of Education on best practices for such data collection. Furthermore, in 2014 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) added sexual orientation items to both the national version and standard state/local versions of their Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The addition of these items will yield first-of-its-kind, population-based national and state data for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and questioning youth. Even with this increased attention to LGBT student issues by the federal government and the addition of items related to sexual orientation in critical youth surveys, GLSEN's National School Climate Survey remains one of a few studies to focus on the school experiences of LGB students nationally, and the only study to focus on transgender student experiences.

GLSEN's NSCS remains vital for our continued advocacy for safe and affirming school environments for LGBT students as there remains little information about LGBT student experiences on a national level. Understanding that LGBT youth may experience other forms of bias and victimization in school—not only related to their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression—we include questions about other forms of bias in school, such as that based on race/ethnicity and disability. We also examine whether or not students report experiences of victimization to school officials or to family members and how these adults address the problem. In addition to documenting indicators of hostile school climate

(e.g., frequency of biased remarks, experiences of harassment and assault, and feeling unsafe), the NSCS examines the negative effects of a hostile school climate on LGBT students' educational outcomes and psychological well-being. We explore the diverse nature of LGBT students' experiences and report how these differ by students' personal and community characteristics.

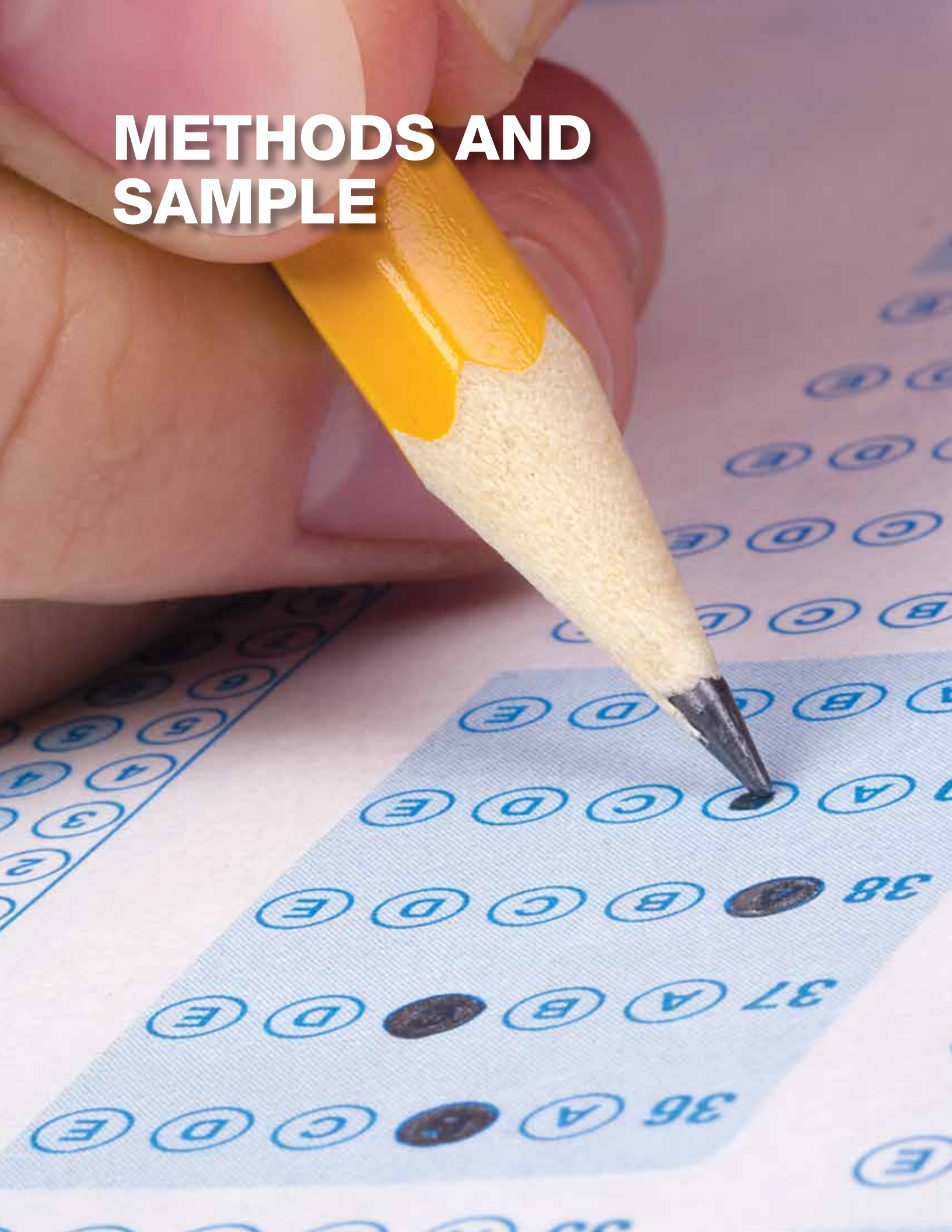
Although it is important to document experiences of victimization in school and their negative impact on the lives of LGBT youth, the NSCS has also allowed us to understand the factors that can lead to safer, healthier, and more affirming learning environments for LGBT students. The NSCS includes questions about the availability of resources and supports for students in their schools, such as supportive student clubs (e.g., GSAs), curricular resources that are inclusive of LGBT issues, supportive teachers or other school staff, and anti-bullying/harassment policies that include explicit protections for LGBT students. Furthermore, it examines the utility of these resources, exploring how school-based resources and supports can improve the quality of school life for LGBT students.

GLSEN's survey has continually expanded and adapted to better capture the picture of what is occurring in schools today. We have seen over the years that types of anti-LGBT language in schools change. For example, we began asking about hearing the expressions "that's so gay" and "no homo" in previous survey installments (2001 and 2009, respectively). In 2013, we also asked about biased language regarding people's weight or body size, their ability (e.g., "spaz" and "retard"), and about transgender people specifically (e.g., remarks such as "tranny" and "he/she")." We also added a question about students' assigned sex (in addition to continuing to ask about their gender identity), thus being able to more adequately capture and understand the genders of transgender and other non-cisgender students (i.e., students whose gender identity is not the same as their sex assigned at birth). Furthermore, growing attention is being paid to the experiences of homeless LGBT youth. Therefore this year, in order to contribute to the broader understanding of homeless LGBT youth, we asked youth about their housing status and examined educational outcomes of homeless LGBT students. We also sought to learn more about LGBT students' post-high school plans by closely examining reasons why students may not complete high school and asking those who do plan to graduate about their intended college majors or fields of study.

In many education and civil rights circles, there has been a growing interest in the role of school disciplinary practices and their contribution to the criminalization of youth (often referred to as the "school-to-prison pipeline"), particularly among marginalized populations. The small body of literature on this topic has often not examined the experiences of LGBT youth specifically,[4] and there is a particular absence of data on transgender youth.[5] Thus, in 2013 NSCS, we added several questions to assess LGBT students' experiences with school discipline and the juvenile/criminal justice system, which will provide us with the first-ever empirical data on experiences of the LGBT student population with regard to school discipline. This year, we also expanded our examination of the ways in which schools discriminate against LGBT youth by asking about a series of specific discriminatory policies and practices, such as restricting same sex couples from school dances and gender-specific dress codes.

In this current report, we share our greater understanding of the policies, practices, and experiences that may make LGBT students feel less a part of the school community and how their school experiences may affect their lives outside of school and their future trajectories. Given that we have been conducting the NSCS for more than a decade, we continue to examine changes over the past 12 years on both indicators of negative school climate and levels of access to LGBT-related resources in schools. As with all of the past reports, we hope that the 2013 NSCS will provide useful information to advocates, educators, and policymakers that will enhance their efforts to create safe and affirming schools for all students, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

METHODS AND SAMPLE



Participants completed an online survey about their experiences in school during the 2012–2013 school year, including hearing biased remarks, feeling safe, being harassed, and feeling comfortable at school; they were also asked about their academic experiences, attitudes about school, involvement in school, and availability of supportive school resources. Youth were eligible to participate in the survey if they were at least 13 years of age, attended a K–12 school in the United States during the 2012–13 school year, and identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or a sexual orientation other than heterosexual (e.g., queer, questioning) or described themselves as transgender or as having another gender identity that is not cisgender ("cisgender" describes a person whose gender identity is aligned with the sex/gender they were assigned at birth). Data collection occurred between April and August, 2013.

The survey was available online through GLSEN's website. Notices and announcements were sent through GLSEN's email and chapter networks as well as through national, regional, and local organizations that provide services to or advocate on behalf of LGBT youth. The national and regional organizations posted notices about the survey on listservs, websites, and social networking websites (e.g., TrevorSpace). Local organizations serving LGBT youth notified their participants about the online survey via email, social networking, and paper flyers. To ensure representation of transgender youth, youth of color, and youth in rural communities, additional outreach efforts were made to notify groups and organizations that work predominantly with these populations about the survey.

Contacting participants only through LGBT youth-serving groups and organizations would have limited our ability to reach LGBT students who were not connected to or engaged in LGBT communities in some way. Thus, in order to broaden our reach to LGBT students who may not have had such connections, we conducted targeted outreach and advertising through social media sites. Specifically, we advertised the survey on Facebook to U.S. users between 13 and 18 years of age who indicated on their profile that they were: male and interested in men, female and interested in women, students who were connected to Facebook pages relevant to LGBT students (e.g., Day of Silence page), or friends of other students connected to relevant Facebook pages. We also advertised to those 13–18 year old Facebook users who listed relevant interests or "Likes" such as "LGBT," "queer," "transgender," or other LGBT-related terms. Information about the survey was also posted on subgroups or pages with significant LGBT youth content or followers of additional social media sites (e.g., Tumblr, Reddit).

The final sample consisted of a total of 7,898 students between the ages of 13 and 21. Students came from all 50 states and the District of Columbia and from 2,770 unique school districts. Table 1.1 presents participants' demographic characteristics and Table 1.2 shows the characteristics of the schools attended by participants. About two thirds of the sample (68.1%) was White/European American, slightly less than half (43.6%) was cisgender female, and over half identified as gay or lesbian (58.8%). Students were in grades 6 to 12, with the largest numbers in grades 10 and 11.

Table 1.1 Characteristics of Survey Participants

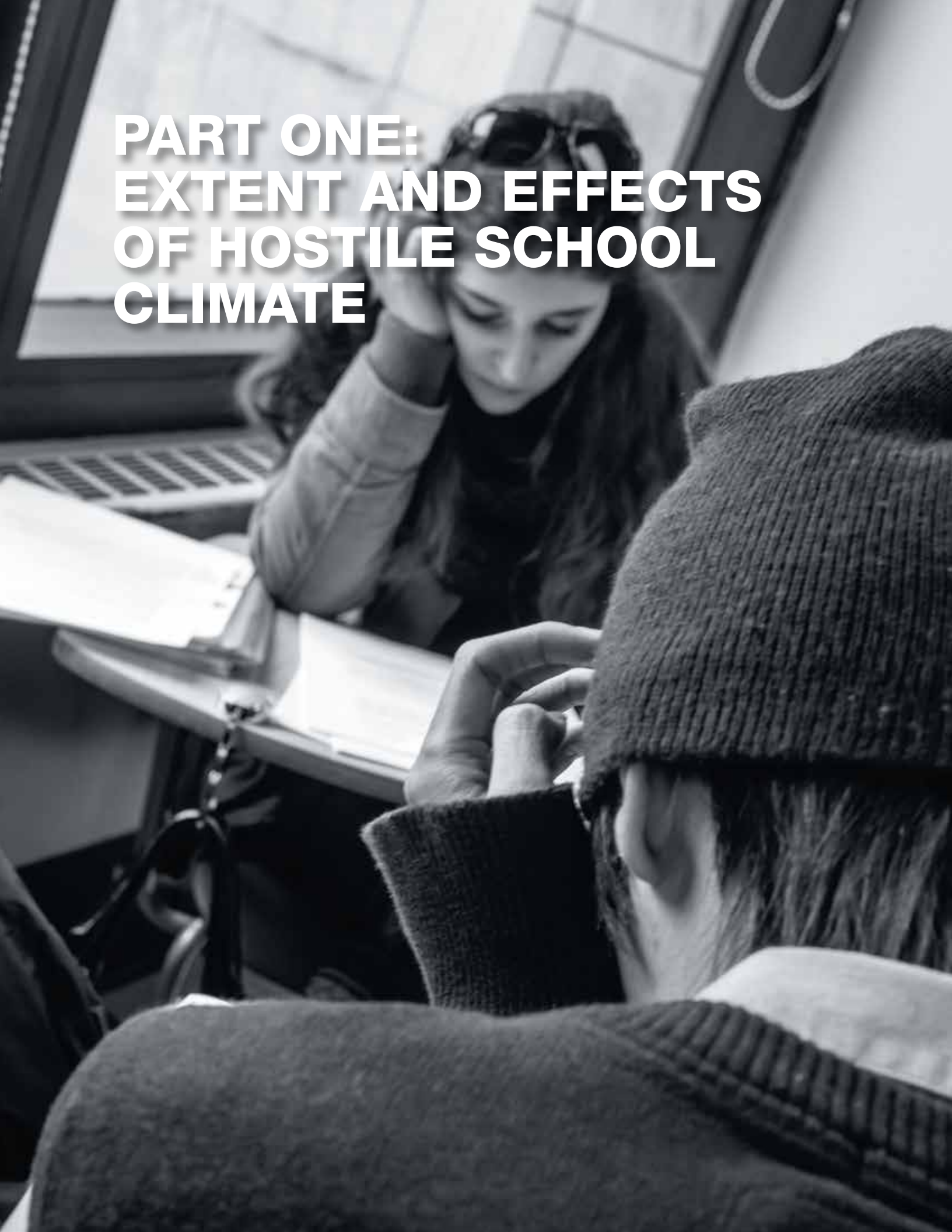
Race and Ethnicity[6] (n = 7378)	
White or European American	68.1%
Hispanic or Latino, any race	14.7%
African American or Black	3.3%
Asian, South Asian, or Pacific Islander	2.7%
Middle Eastern or Arab American, any race	1.4%
Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native	0.7%
Multiracial	8.9%
Sexual Orientation[7] (n = 7579)	
Gay or Lesbian	58.8%
Bisexual or Pansexual[8]	31.6%
Queer	4.8%
Another Sexual Orientation (e.g., omnisexual)	2.2%
Questioning or Unsure	2.6%
Average Age (n = 7898) = 16.0 years	

Gender[9] (n = 7466)	
Cisgender	75.6%
Female	*43.6%*
Male	*32.0%*
Transgender	9.5%
Female	*1.5%*
Male	*5.9%*
Another Transgender Identity (e.g., transgender and also identifying as both male and female, or as transgender only)	*2.1%*
Genderqueer	10.6%
Another Gender (e.g., agender, genderfluid)	4.3%
Grade in School (n = 7357)	
6th	0.1%
7th	3.5%
8th	9.0%
9th	18.2%
10th	23.6%
11th	25.8%
12th	20.8%

Table 1.2 Characteristics of Survey Participants' Schools

Grade Levels (n = 7821)	
K through 12 School	6.5%
Elementary School	0.1%
Lower School (elementary and middle grades)	0.9%
Middle School	8.9%
Upper School (middle and high grades)	7.8%
High School	75.8%
School Locale[10] (n = 7821)	
Urban	28.6%
Suburban	42.0%
Rural or Small Town	29.4%

School Type (n = 7695)	
Public School	89.2%
Charter	*3.5%*
Magnet	*8.8%*
Religious-Affiliated School	4.1%
Other Independent or Private School	6.6%
Region[11] (n = 7897)	
Northeast	22.2%
South	31.2%
Midwest	21.9%
West	24.8%



PART ONE: EXTENT AND EFFECTS OF HOSTILE SCHOOL CLIMATE

School Safety

Key Findings

- Nearly 6 in 10 LGBT students reported feeling unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation; nearly 4 in 10 reported feeling unsafe at school because of how they expressed their gender.
- Almost one third of students missed at least one day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.
- LGBT students reported most commonly avoiding school bathrooms and locker rooms because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable in those spaces.
- Most LGBT students reported avoiding school functions and extracurricular activities to some extent, and about a quarter avoided them often or frequently.

Overall Safety at School

For LGBT youth, school can be an unsafe place for a variety of reasons. Students in our survey were asked whether they ever felt unsafe at school because of a personal characteristic, including: sexual orientation, gender, gender expression (i.e., how traditionally "masculine" or "feminine" they were in appearance or behavior), body size or weight, family's income or economic status, academic ability, citizenship status, and actual or perceived race or ethnicity, disability, or religion. Over two thirds of LGBT students (69.0%) reported feeling unsafe at school because of at least one of these personal characteristics. As shown in Figure 1.1, LGBT students most commonly felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation and gender expression:

- More than half of LGBT students (55.5%) reported feeling unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation.
- 4 in 10 students (38.7%) felt unsafe because of how they expressed their gender.
- Sizable percentages of LGBT students also reported feeling unsafe because of their body size or weight (34.9%) and because of their academic ability or how well they do in school (20.0%).

We also asked students to tell us if they felt unsafe at school for another reason not included in the listed characteristics and, if so, why. About one tenth (9.4%) of survey participants reported feeling unsafe at school for other reasons, most commonly cited due to interpersonal conflicts with other students and mental health issues such as anxiety or depression (2.1% and 1.4% of all participants, respectively).

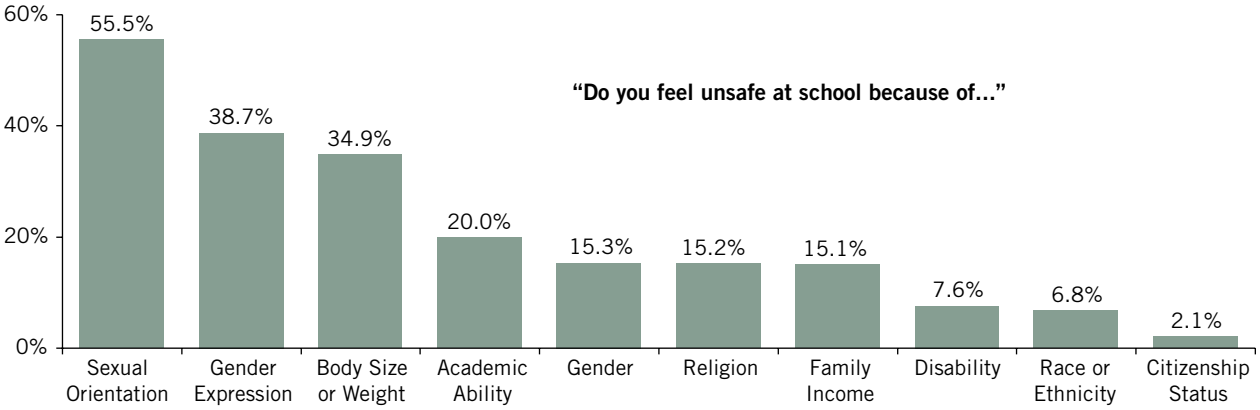
School Engagement and Safety Concerns

When students feel unsafe or uncomfortable in school they may choose to avoid the particular areas or activities where they feel most unwelcome or may feel that they need to avoid attending school altogether. Thus, a hostile school climate can impact an LGBT student's ability to fully engage and participate with the school community. To examine this possible restriction of LGBT students' school engagement, we asked about specific spaces and school activities they might avoid because of safety concerns.

We asked LGBT students if there were particular spaces at school that they avoided specifically because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. As shown in Figure 1.2, school bathrooms and locker rooms were most commonly avoided, with a little more than a third of students avoiding each of these spaces because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (35.4% and 35.3%, respectively). Nearly one third of LGBT students also said that they avoided Physical Education (P.E.) or gym classes (31.9%), and more than one fifth avoided school athletic fields or facilities (21.2%) or the school cafeteria or lunchroom (20.3%) because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

Feeling unsafe or uncomfortable at school can negatively affect the ability of students to thrive and succeed academically, particularly if it results

Figure 1.1 Percentage of LGBT Students Who Feel Unsafe at School Because of Actual or Perceived Personal Characteristics



in avoiding school. When asked about absenteeism, nearly one third (30.3%) of LGBT students reported missing at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and over a tenth (10.6%) missed four or more days in the past month (see Figure 1.3).

In addition to avoiding certain spaces in school because of safety reasons, LGBT students may also avoid other more social aspects of student life, for similar fears for personal safety. For any student, involvement in school community activities like clubs or special events can have a positive impact on students' sense of belonging at school, self-esteem, and academic achievement.[12] However, LGBT students who do not feel safe or comfortable in these environments may not have full access to the benefits of engaging in these school activities. Thus, we asked students about two types of school activities they may avoid because of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable: school functions, such as school dances or assemblies, and extracurricular clubs or programs. Most LGBT students reported avoiding school functions and extracurricular activities to some extent (68.1% and 61.2%, respectively), and about a quarter avoided them often or frequently (27.2% and 22.0%, respectively; see Figure 1.4). These high rates of avoiding school activities indicate that LGBT students may be discouraged from participating in these important aspects of school communities.

Figure 1.2 Percentage of LGBT Students Who Avoid Spaces at School Because They Feel Unsafe or Uncomfortable

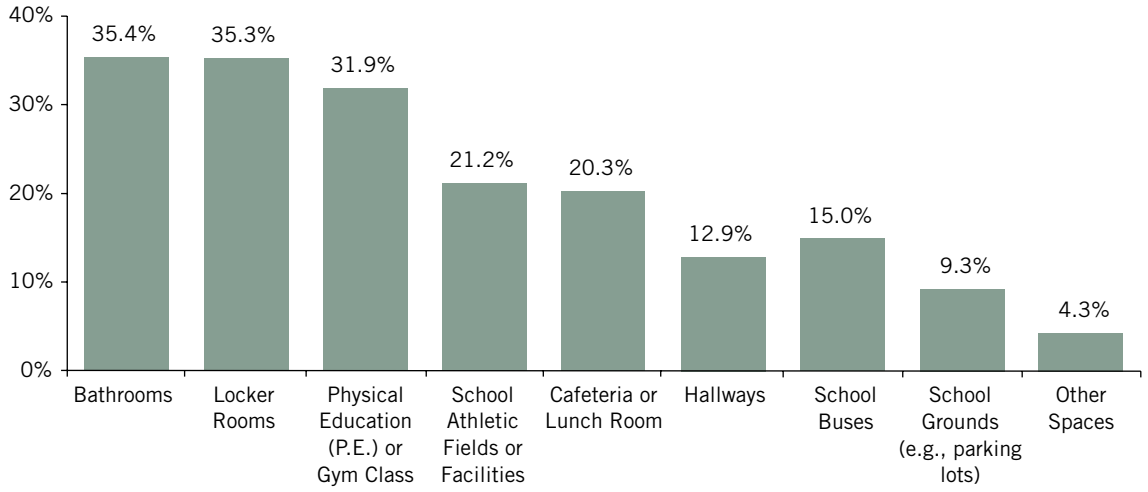


Figure 1.3 Frequency that LGBT Students Missed Days of School in the Past Month Because of Feeling Unsafe or Uncomfortable

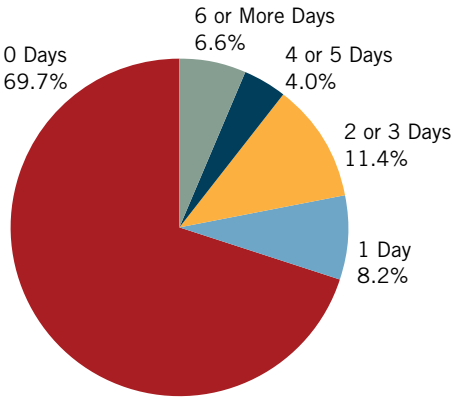
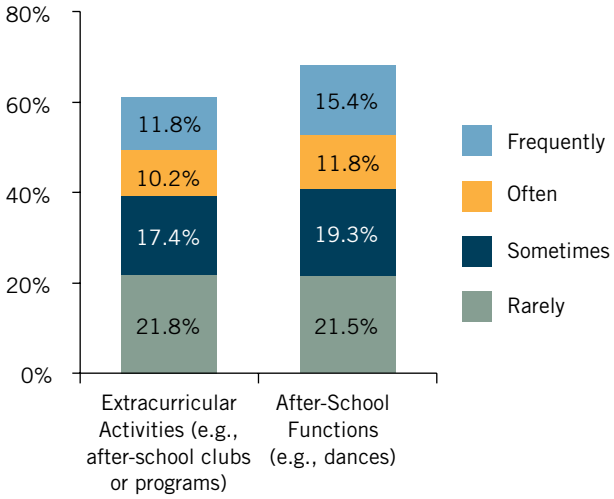


Figure 1.4 Percentage of LGBT Students Who Avoid School Activities Because They Feel Unsafe or Uncomfortable



Exposure to Biased Language

Key Findings

- Nearly two thirds of LGBT students heard homophobic remarks often or frequently at school.
- Three quarters of students heard the word "gay" used in a negative way often or frequently at school.
- More than half of students heard negative remarks about gender expression often or frequently at school. Remarks about students not acting "masculine enough" were more common than remarks about students not acting "feminine enough."
- A third of LGBT students heard negative remarks specifically about transgender people, like "tranny" or "he/she," often or frequently.
- More than half of students heard homophobic remarks from school personnel.
- Less than a fifth of students reported that school personnel frequently intervene when hearing homophobic remarks or negative remarks about gender expression.
- 4 in 5 students heard sexist remarks often or frequently at school, and nearly 3 in 4 heard negative remarks about weight or body size often or frequently.
- 5 out of 10 students heard their peers at school make racist remarks often or frequently at school.

GLSEN strives to make schools safe and affirming for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic that may be the basis for harassment. Keeping classrooms and hallways free of homophobic, sexist, racist, and other types of biased language is one aspect of creating a more positive school climate for all students. In order to assess this feature of school climate, we asked LGBT students about their experiences with hearing anti-LGBT and other types of biased remarks while at school. Because homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression are specifically relevant to LGBT students, we asked students in our survey additional questions about school staff's use of and responses to hearing these types of anti-LGBT language.

Hearing Anti-LGBT Remarks at School

In the 2013 survey, as in our previous surveys, we asked students about the frequency of hearing homophobic remarks (such as "faggot" and "dyke"), hearing the word "gay" used in a negative way, and hearing negative remarks about the way students expressed their gender at school (such as comments about a female student not acting "feminine enough"). We also asked students about the frequency of hearing homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression from school staff, as well as whether anyone intervened when hearing this type of language in school. Further, we asked students about how often they heard negative remarks about transgender people (such as "tranny" or "he/she").

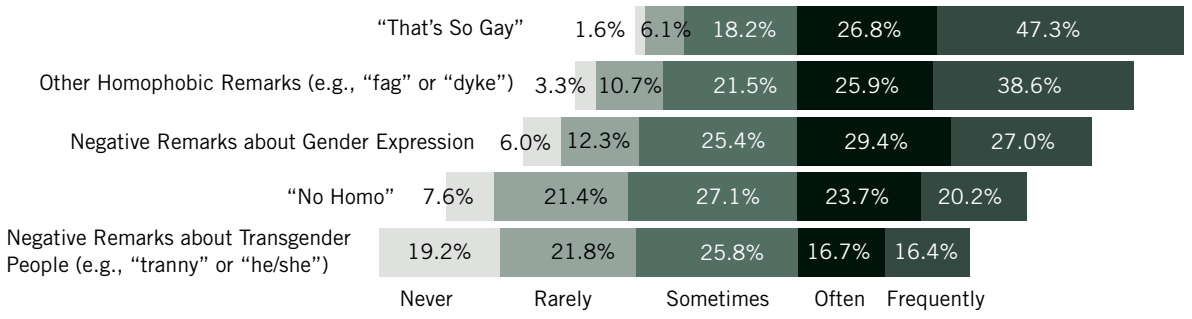
Homophobic Remarks. Homophobic remarks were the most commonly heard anti-LGBT remarks by LGBT students in our survey.[13] As shown in Figure 1.5, nearly two thirds (64.5%) of LGBT students

"Students use gay slurs all the time, and no one does anything about it. I talked to the counselor about the issue, and she shrugged it off."

reported hearing students make derogatory remarks, such as "dyke" or "faggot," often or frequently in school. Further, we asked students who heard homophobic remarks in school how pervasive this behavior was among the student population. As shown in Figure 1.6, more than a quarter of students (28.7%) reported that these types of remarks were made by most of their peers. In addition, about half (51.4%) of students reported ever hearing homophobic remarks from their teachers or other school staff (see Figure 1.7).

We also asked students about the frequency of hearing the word "gay" used in a negative way in school, such as in the expression "that's so gay" or "you're so gay." Use of these expressions was even more prevalent than other homophobic remarks like "fag" or "dyke" — 74.1% of students heard "gay" used in a negative way often or frequently at school (see also Figure 1.5). These expressions are often used to mean that something or someone is stupid or worthless and, thus, may be dismissed as innocuous by school authorities and students in comparison to overtly derogatory remarks such as "faggot." However, many LGBT students did not view these expressions as innocuous: 90.8% reported that hearing "gay" used in a negative manner caused them to feel bothered or distressed to some degree (see Figure 1.8).

Figure 1.5 Frequency that LGBT Students Hear Anti-LGBT Remarks at School



"No homo" is a relatively recent phrase and is often employed at the end of a statement in order to rid it of a potential homosexual connotation. For instance, some might use the phrase after giving a compliment to someone of the same sex as in "I like your jeans — no homo." This phrase promotes the notion that it is unacceptable to have a same-sex attraction. Beginning with the 2009 installment of the survey, we have asked students about the frequency of hearing this expression in school. This expression was less common than other types of homophobic remarks: less than half (43.9%) of LGBT students heard "no homo" used often or frequently at school (see Figure 1.5).

Students who reported hearing homophobic remarks at school were asked how often homophobic remarks were made in the presence of teachers or other school staff and whether staff intervened if present. About a third (30.4%) of students in our survey reported that school staff members were present all or most of the time when homophobic remarks were made. When school staff were present, the use of biased and derogatory language by students remained largely unchallenged. For example, less than a fifth (18.8%) reported that these school personnel intervened most of the time or always when homophobic remarks were made in their presence,

Figure 1.6 LGBT Students' Reports on How Many Students Make Homophobic Remarks

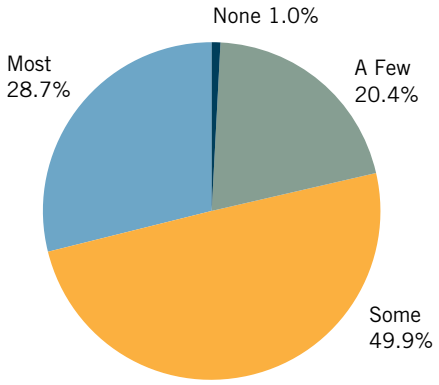


Figure 1.8 Degree that LGBT Students Were Bothered or Distressed as a Result of Hearing "Gay" Used in a Derogatory Way

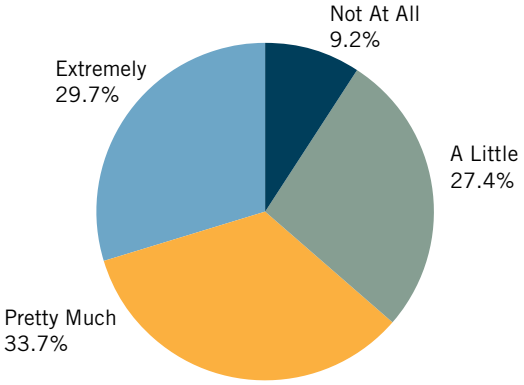


Figure 1.7 Frequency that LGBT Students Hear Homophobic Remarks from Teachers or Other School Staff

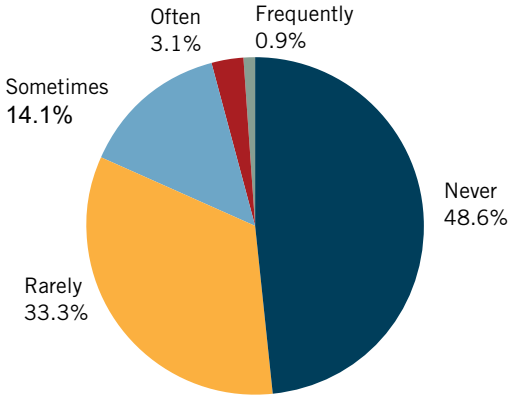
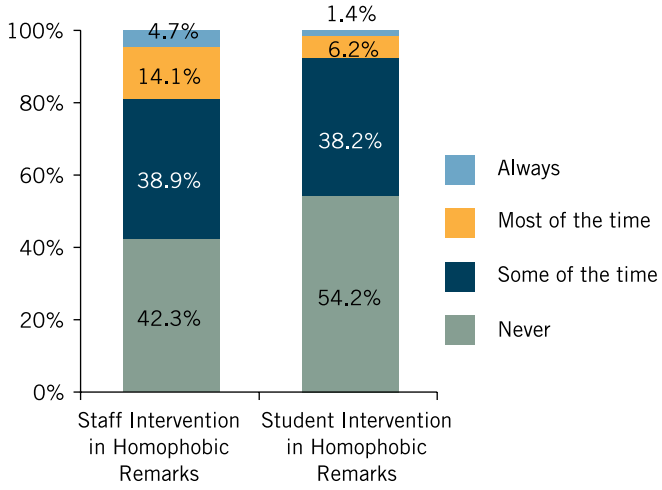


Figure 1.9 LGBT Students' Reports of the Frequency of School Staff and Student Intervention when Homophobic Remarks Are Made



and 42.3% reported that staff never intervened when present (see Figure 1.9). Disturbingly, about half (51.4%) of LGBT students reported ever hearing homophobic remarks from their teachers or other school staff (see Figure 1.7).

One would expect teachers and school staff to bear the responsibility for addressing problems of biased language in school. However, students may also intervene when hearing biased language, especially given that school personnel are often not present during such times. Thus, other students' willingness to intervene when hearing this language may be another important indicator of school climate. However, few students reported that their peers intervened always or most of the time when hearing homophobic remarks (7.6%), and over half (54.2%) said that their peers never intervened (see Figure 1.9).

The majority of LGBT students report rampant use of homophobic remarks in their schools which contributes to a hostile learning environment for this population. Infrequent intervention by school authorities when hearing biased language in school may send a message to students that homophobic language is tolerated. Furthermore, school staff may themselves be modeling poor behavior and legitimizing the use of homophobic language in that most students heard school staff make homophobic remarks.

Negative Remarks about Gender Expression. Society often imposes norms for what is considered appropriate expression of one's gender. Those who express themselves in a manner considered to be atypical may experience criticism, harassment, and sometimes violence. Thus, we asked students two separate questions about hearing comments related to a student's gender expression — one question asked how often they heard remarks about someone not acting "masculine" enough, and another question asked how often they heard comments about someone not acting "feminine" enough.

Findings from this survey demonstrate that negative remarks about someone's gender expression were pervasive in schools. Overall, as shown previously in Figure 1.5, 56.4% of students reported hearing either type of remark about someone's gender expression often or frequently at school. Figure 1.10 shows the frequency of remarks for not acting "masculine" enough and not acting "feminine" enough separately — remarks about students not acting "masculine" enough were more common than remarks about students not acting "feminine" enough.[14] About half of students (48.8%) had often or frequently heard negative comments about students' "masculinity," compared to more than a third (34.5%) who heard comments as often about students' "femininity" (see Figure 1.10). When asked how much of the

Figure 1.10 Frequency that LGBT Students Hear Negative Remarks About Students' Gender Expression

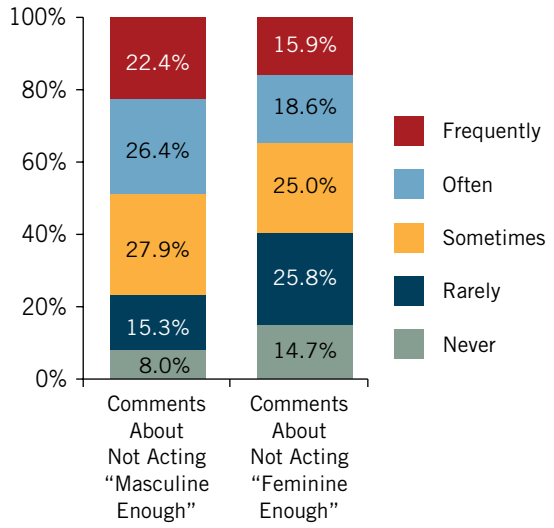
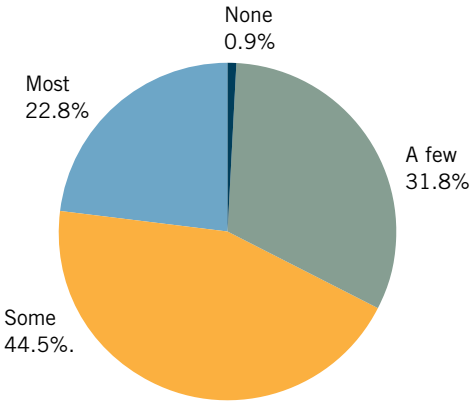


Figure 1.11 LGBT Students' Reports on How Many Students Make Negative Remarks about Gender Expression



"Students think there aren't any LGBT students in the school, so if they say something is 'so gay' or they call their friend a faggot, they think no one would be offended."

student population made these types of remarks, about a quarter (22.8%) of students reported that most of their peers made negative remarks about someone's gender expression (see Figure 1.11).

As is the case with homophobic remarks, remarks about gender expression were most often made when educators were not present. Approximately a quarter (26.5%) of students in our survey who heard these remarks reported that school staff members were present all or most of the time when negative remarks were made about gender expression. In addition, intervention by peers or educators in negative remarks about gender expression was even less common than intervention in homophobic remarks.[15] Only one in ten (10.2%) LGBT students reported that school personnel intervened most of the time or always when these remarks were made in their presence (see Figure 1.12). In addition to this lack of intervention on the part of school staff, over half (55.5%) of students heard teachers or other staff make negative comments about a student's gender expression at school (see Figure 1.13).

Similar to homophobic remarks, students were not likely to intervene when hearing these kinds of remarks about gender expression; only 6.3% of LGBT students reported that their peers intervened most of the time or always (see also Figure 1.12). The high frequency of hearing these remarks coupled with the fact that these comments are so rarely challenged suggests that acceptance of a range of gender expressions is relatively uncommon in schools.

Negative Remarks about Transgender People. Similar to negative comments about gender expression, people may make negative comments about transgender people because they can pose a challenge to "traditional" ideas about gender. Therefore, we asked students about how

Figure 1.12 LGBT Students' Reports of the Frequency of School Staff and Student Intervention when Negative Remarks about Gender Expression Are Made

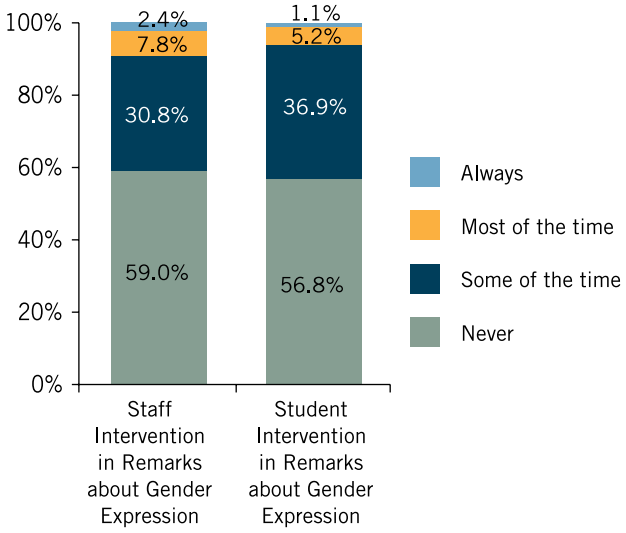
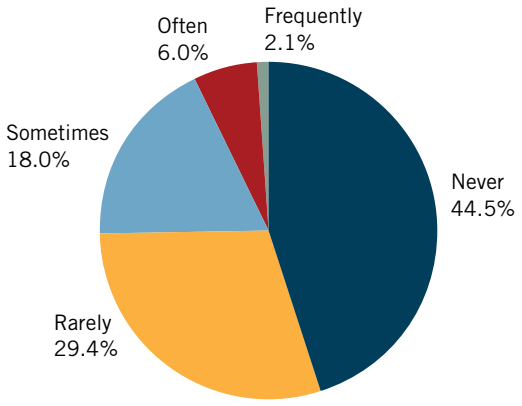


Figure 1.13 Frequency that LGBT Students Hear Negative Remarks about Gender Expression from Teachers or Other School Staff



often they heard negative remarks specifically about transgender people, like "tranny" or "he/she." A third (33.1%) of LGBT students in our survey reported hearing these comments often or frequently (see Figure 1.5).

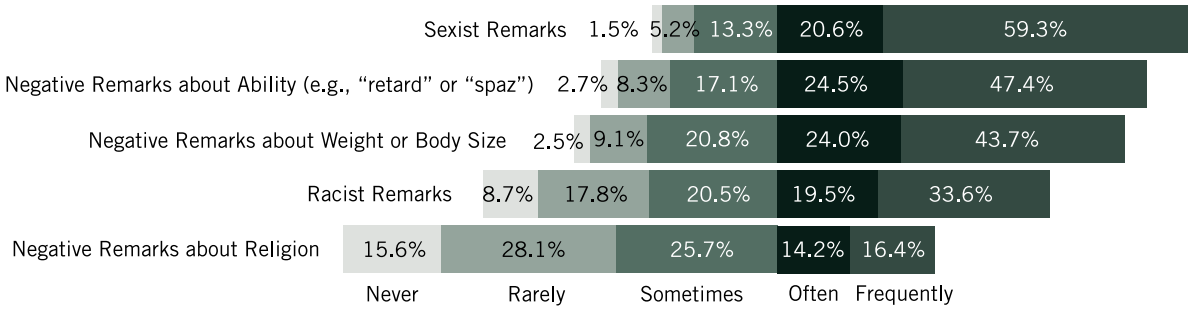
The pervasiveness of anti-LGBT remarks is a concerning contribution to hostile school climates for all LGBT students. Any negative remark about sexual orientation, gender, or gender expression may signal to LGBT students that they are unwelcome in their school communities, even if a specific negative comment is not directly applicable to the individual sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression of the LGBT student who hears it. For example, negative comments about gender expression may disparage transgender or LGB people, even if transgender-specific or homophobic slurs are not used.

Hearing Other Types of Biased Remarks at School

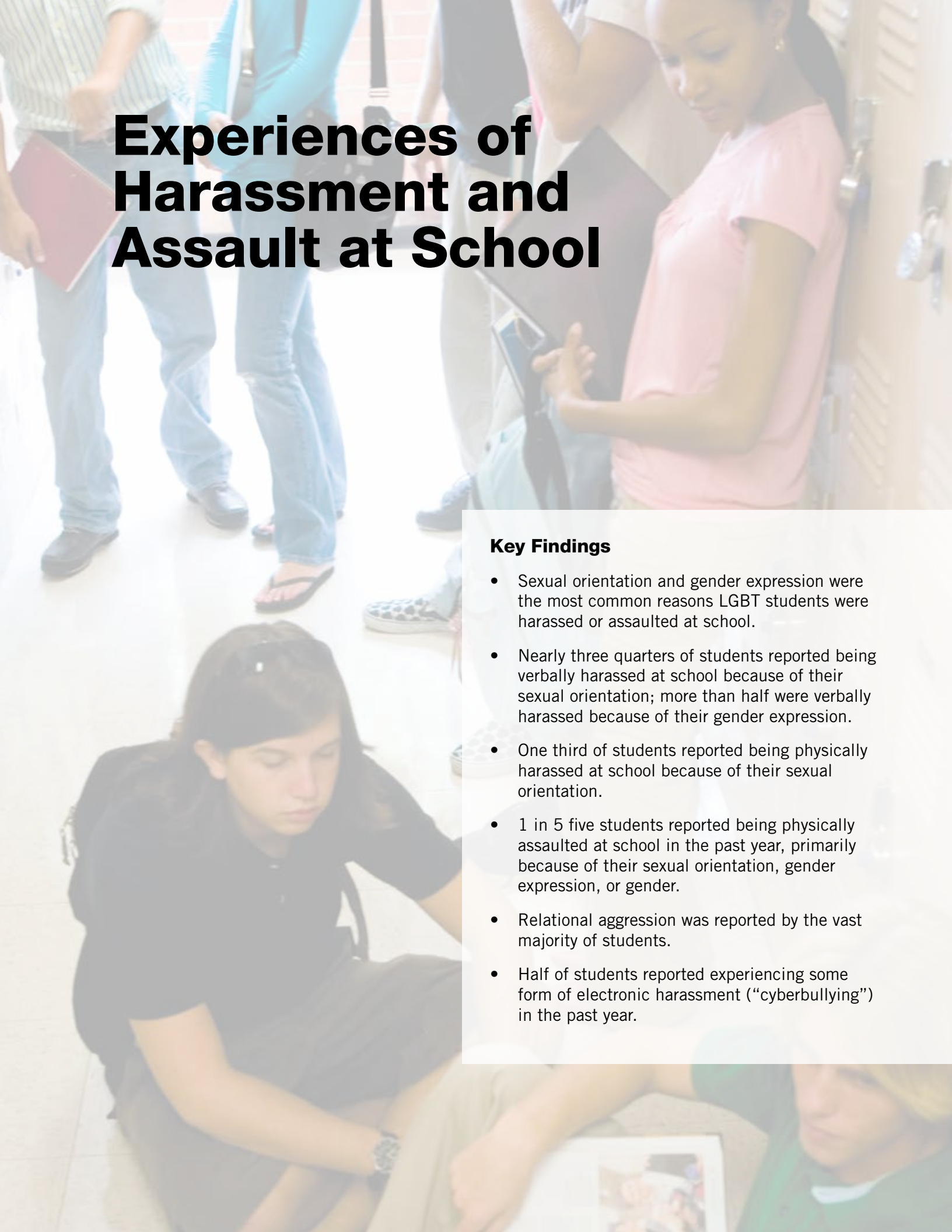
In addition to hearing anti-LGBT remarks at school, hearing other types of biased language is an important indicator of school climate for LGBT students. We asked students about their experiences hearing racist remarks (such as "nigger" or "spic"), sexist remarks (such as someone being called "bitch" in a negative way or girls being talked about as inferior to boys), negative remarks about other students' ability (such as "retard" or "spaz"), negative remarks about other students' religion, and negative comments about other students' body size or weight at school.

For most of these types of remarks, the LGBT students in the survey reported that they were commonplace in their schools, although some were more prevalent than others (see Figure 1.14).[16] Sexist remarks, negative remarks about other students' ability, and remarks about weight or body size were the most commonly heard types of biased remarks in school: more than three quarters (79.9%) of LGBT students heard sexist remarks regularly (i.e., frequently or often), and more than two thirds heard remarks about ability and weight/body size regularly from other students (71.9% and 67.7%, respectively). Comments about race/ethnicity were less common with about half (53.1%) reporting hearing racist remarks from other students regularly. The fewest number of students — just under a third (30.6%) — reported regularly hearing negative remarks about other students' religions.

Figure 1.14 Frequency that LGBT Students Hear Other Biased Remarks at School



Experiences of Harassment and Assault at School



Key Findings

- Sexual orientation and gender expression were the most common reasons LGBT students were harassed or assaulted at school.
- Nearly three quarters of students reported being verbally harassed at school because of their sexual orientation; more than half were verbally harassed because of their gender expression.
- One third of students reported being physically harassed at school because of their sexual orientation.
- 1 in 5 five students reported being physically assaulted at school in the past year, primarily because of their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender.
- Relational aggression was reported by the vast majority of students.
- Half of students reported experiencing some form of electronic harassment (“cyberbullying”) in the past year.

"This past week has been nothing but 'Is that a boy or a girl?' said loudly behind me or people calling me 'mangirl.' It's making school feel much more unsafe and I hate walking through the halls."

Hearing anti-LGBT remarks in school can contribute to feeling unsafe at school and create a negative learning environment. However, direct experiences with harassment and assault may have even more serious consequences on the lives of these students. We asked survey participants how often ("never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," or "frequently") they had been verbally harassed, physically harassed, or physically assaulted at school during the past year specifically based on a personal characteristic, including sexual orientation, gender, gender expression (e.g., not acting "masculine" or "feminine" enough), actual or perceived race or ethnicity, and actual or perceived disability.

Verbal Harassment

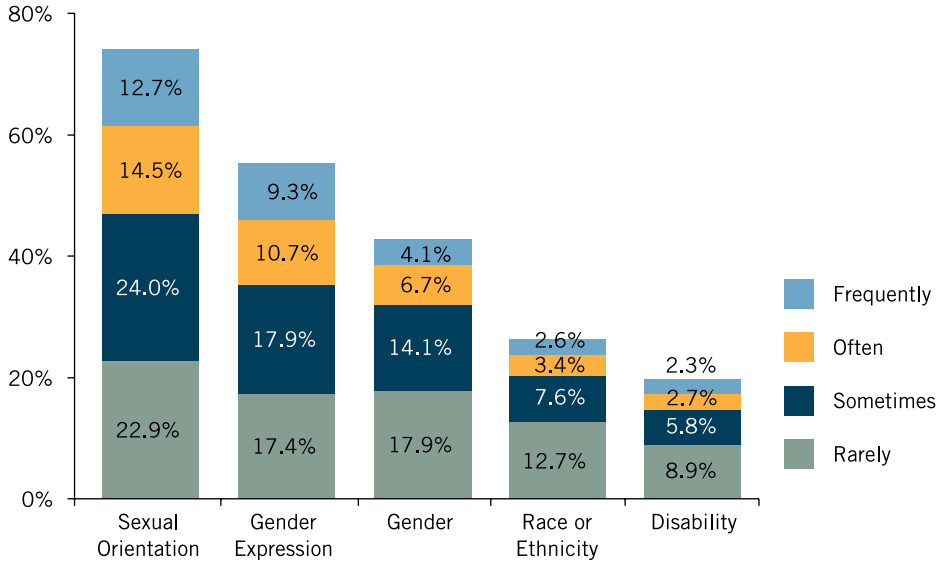
Students in our survey were asked how often in the past year they had been verbally harassed (e.g., being called names or threatened) at school specifically based on personal characteristics. An overwhelming majority (85.4%) reported being verbally harassed at some point in the past year based on any of these personal characteristics, and 38.9% experienced high frequencies (often or frequently) of verbal harassment. LGBT students most commonly reported experiencing verbal harassment at school based on their sexual orientation or how they expressed their gender (see Figure 1.15):[17]

- Almost three quarters of LGBT students (74.1%) had been verbally harassed based on their sexual orientation; over a quarter (27.2%) experienced this harassment often or frequently; and

- A majority of LGBT students (55.2%) were verbally harassed at school based on their gender expression; a fifth (20.0%) reported being harassed for this reason often or frequently.

Although not as commonly reported, many LGBT students were harassed in school based on their gender — about two fifths (42.1%) had been verbally harassed in the past year for this reason;

Figure 1.15 Frequency that LGBT Students Experienced Verbal Harassment in the Past School Year



about a tenth (10.8%) were verbally harassed often or frequently. In addition, as shown in Figure 1.15, sizable percentages of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed at school based on their actual or perceived race or ethnicity (26.3%) and disability (19.7%).

Physical Harassment

With regard to physical harassment, over a third (39.3%) of LGBT students had been physically harassed (e.g., shoved or pushed) at some point at school during the past year based on any personal characteristic. Their experiences of physical harassment followed a pattern similar to verbal harassment — students most commonly reported being physically harassed at school based on their sexual orientation or gender expression (see Figure 1.16):[18]

- 32.6% of LGBT students had been physically harassed at school based on their sexual orientation, and 9.9% reported that this harassment occurred often or frequently; and
- A little less than a quarter (22.7%) had been physically harassed at school based on their gender expression, with 7.1% experiencing this often or frequently.

With regard to other personal characteristics, about a fifth of respondents (17.5%) had been physically harassed based on their gender, 7.8% based on their race/ethnicity, and 7.6% based on an actual or perceived disability (see also Figure 1.16).

Physical Assault

LGBT students were less likely to report experiencing physical assault (e.g., punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon) at school than verbal or physical harassment, which is not surprising given the more severe nature of assault. Nonetheless, 19.0% of students in our survey were assaulted at school during the past year for any personal characteristic, again most commonly based on their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender (see Figure 1.17):

- 16.5% of LGBT students were assaulted at school based on their sexual orientation;
- 11.4% were assaulted at school based on how they expressed their gender; and
- 8.0% of students were assaulted at school based on their gender.

Physical assault based on actual or perceived race/ethnicity or disability was less commonly reported: 3.9% and 4.1% of LGBT students reported any occurrence in the past year, respectively (see also Figure 1.17).[19]

Figure 1.16 Frequency that LGBT Students Experienced Physical Harassment in the Past School Year

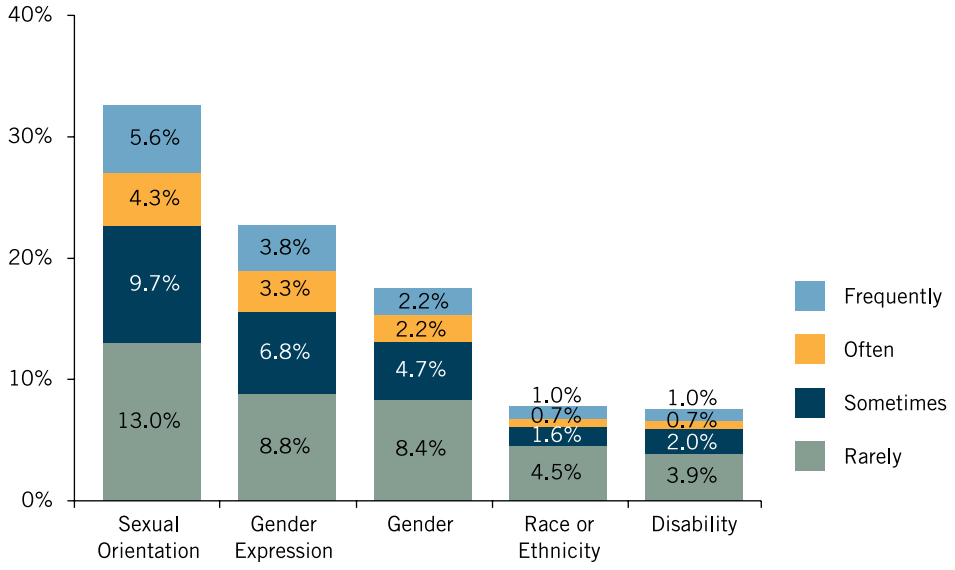
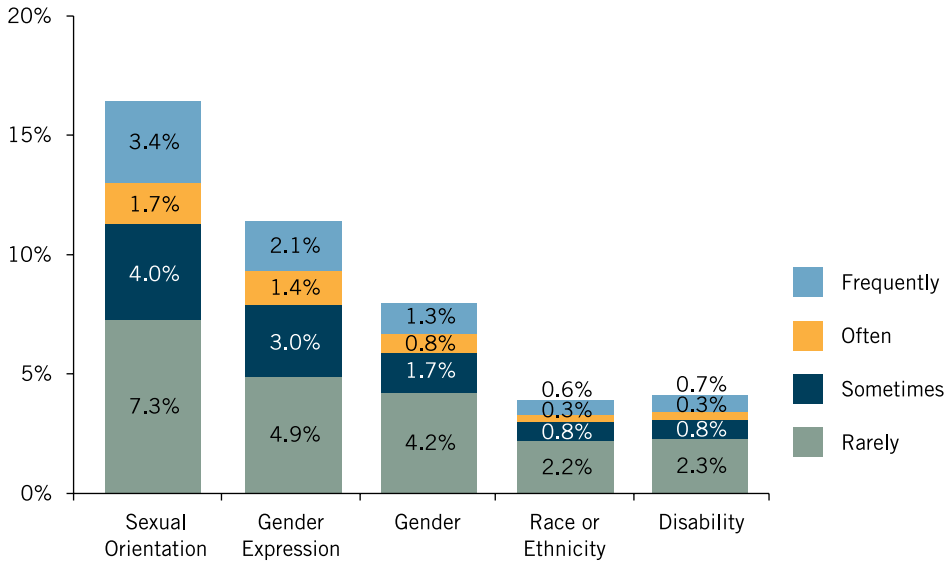


Figure 1.17 Frequency that LGBT Students Experienced Physical Assault in the Past School Year



Experiences of Other Types of Harassment and Negative Events

LGBT students may be harassed or experience other negative events at school for reasons that are not clearly related to sexual orientation, gender expression, or another personal characteristic. In our survey, we also asked students how often they experienced these other types of events in the past year, such as being sexually harassed or deliberately excluded by their peers.

Relational Aggression. Research on school-based bullying and harassment often focuses on physical or overt acts of aggressive behavior; however, it is also important to examine relational forms of aggression that can damage peer relationships, such as spreading rumors or excluding students from peer activities. We asked participants how often they experience two common forms of relational aggression: being purposefully excluded by peers and being the target of mean rumors or lies. As illustrated in Figure 1.18, the vast majority of LGBT students (87.7%) in our survey reported that they had felt deliberately excluded or "left out" by other students, and nearly half (48.2%) experienced this often or frequently. Most (79.3%) had mean rumors or lies told about them at school, and about a third (34.9%) experienced this often or frequently.

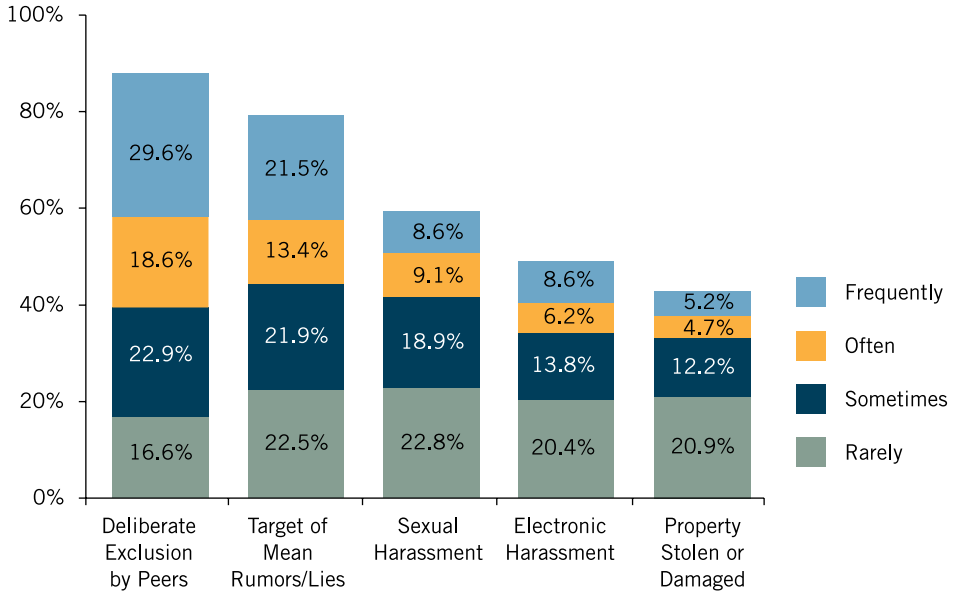
Sexual Harassment. Harassment experienced by LGBT students in school can often be sexual in nature, particularly for lesbian and bisexual young women and transgender youth.[20] Survey participants were asked how often they had experienced sexual harassment at school, such as unwanted touching or sexual remarks directed at them. As shown in Figure 1.18, about three in five (59.3%) LGBT students had been sexually harassed at school, and nearly a fifth (17.7 %) reported that such events occurred often or frequently.

Electronic Harassment or "Cyberbullying." Electronic harassment (often called "cyberbullying") is using an electronic medium, such as a mobile phone or Internet communications, to threaten or harm others. In recent years there has been much attention given to this type of harassment, as access to the Internet, mobile phones, and other electronic forms of communication has increased for many youth.[21] We asked students in our survey how often they were harassed or threatened by students at their school via electronic mediums (e.g., text messages, emails, instant messages, or postings on Internet sites such as Facebook), and about half (49.0%) of LGBT students reported experiencing this type of harassment in the past year. 14.8% had experienced it often or frequently (see also Figure 1.18).

Property Theft or Damage at School. Having one's personal property damaged or stolen is yet another dimension of a hostile school climate for students. Almost half (43.0%) of LGBT students reported that their property had been stolen or purposefully damaged by other students at school in the past year, and about tenth (9.8%) said that such events had occurred often or frequently (see Figure 1.18).

"I have been so hurt at that school. I have gotten beat up, almost killed, and no one there would do anything about it, except one teacher"

Figure 1.18 Frequency that LGBT Students Experienced Other Types of Harassment in School in the Past Year



Reporting of School-Based Harassment and Assault

Key Findings

- The majority of LGBT students who were harassed or assaulted in school did not report it to school personnel.
- The most common reasons given for not reporting incidents of victimization to school personnel were doubts that staff would effectively address the situation and fears that reporting would make the situation worse.
- Only a third of students who had reported incidents of victimization to school personnel said that staff effectively addressed the problem. When asked to describe how staff responded to these reports students most commonly said that staff did nothing and/or told the reporting student to ignore the victimization.

GLSEN advocates that anti-bullying/harassment measures in school must include clear processes for reporting by both students and staff and that staff are adequately trained to effectively address instances of bullying and harassment when informed about them. In our survey, we asked those students who had experienced harassment or assault in the past school year how often they had reported the incidents to school staff. As shown in Figure 1.19, the majority of these students never reported incidents to staff (56.7%), and few students indicated that they regularly reported incidents of harassment or assault (16.1% reporting "most of the time" or "always" to staff).

Given that family members may be able to advocate on behalf of the student with school personnel, we also asked students if they reported harassment or assault to a family member (i.e., to their parent or guardian or to another family member), and only about half of the students (46.5%) said that they had ever told a family member (see also Figure 1.19). Students who had reported incidents to a family member were asked how often a family member had talked to school staff about the incident, and a little over half (56.0%) said that the family member had ever addressed the issue with school staff (see Figure 1.20).

Reasons for Not Reporting Harassment or Assault

Reporting incidents of harassment and assault to school staff may be an intimidating task for students. In addition, there is no guarantee that reporting incidents to school personnel will result in effective intervention. Students who reported that they had not told school personnel about their experiences with harassment or assault were asked why they did not do so (see Table 1.3). Students cited several key reasons why they chose not to report these incidents: 1) they doubted that staff would effectively address the situation; 2) they feared making the situation worse; 3) they perceived their experience to not be severe enough to report; 4) they were concerned about how school staff may react if they reported; and 5) they chose other ways of dealing with being victimized in school, such as handling the situation on their own.

Doubted that Effective Intervention Would Occur. As shown in Table 1.3, the most common reasons students did not report harassment to school staff were doubts about the efficacy of reporting. LGBT students often expressed beliefs that either nothing or nothing effective would be done to address the situation. Others felt that it was "not worth it" or pointless to report, often as a result of previous, unsuccessful experiences of reporting harassment or a perception that even well-intentioned staff lacked the competence to successfully address issues of bullying and harassment:

Figure 1.19 Frequency that LGBT Students Reported Incidents of Harassment and Assault

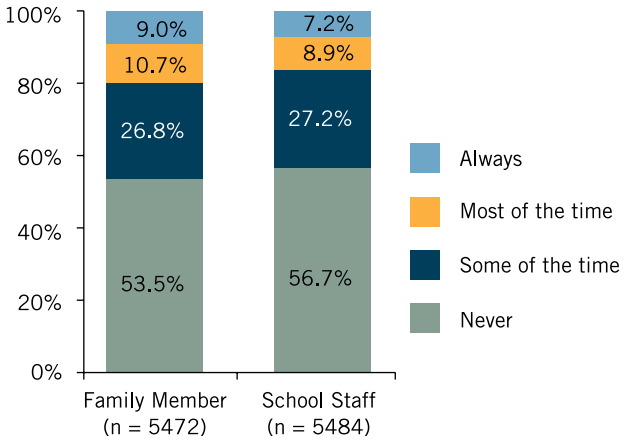
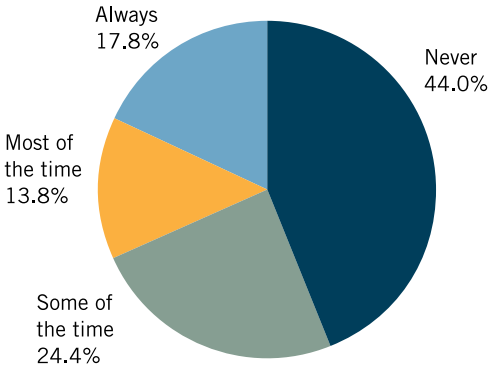


Figure 1.20 Frequency that LGBT Students' Family Members Intervened in Incidents of Harassment and Assault (n = 2504)



The staff at my school do nothing about harassment. They just say, "kids will be kids." Since when does being a kid include being so cruel? –Cisgender female student, 8th grade, Indiana

I reported being assaulted four times, and there never was any action to discipline my attackers or to protect me, so I didn't see any reason to continue wasting my time with school authorities. –Genderqueer student, 12th grade, Arizona

Sometimes they just brush it off and do nothing if they don't think it's "important" enough. I feel they don't care much. –Transgender male student, 9th grade, Ohio

Table 1.3 Reasons LGBT Students Did Not Report Incidents of Harassment or Assault to School Staff (n = 4670)

	Students Reporting Specific Response*	
	%	number
Doubts that Effective Intervention Would Occur (e.g., believed staff would do nothing or that staff would be incompetent)	**32.5%**	**(n = 1520)**
Fears Related to Making the Situation Worse	**23.7%**	**(n = 1109)**
Safety concerns (e.g., fear of retaliation, physical violence)	9.7%	(n = 450)
General fears about the situation getting worse/making it worse	7.9%	(n = 367)
Did not want to be a "snitch" or "tattle-tale	3.0%	(n = 142)
Confidentiality issues (e.g., fear of being "outed")	4.4%	(n = 204)
Perceptions of the Severity of Harassment	**19.3%**	**(n = 901)**
Not a big deal/Not serious enough	17.1%	(n = 799)
Accustomed to it (e.g., harassment is part of school life)	2.4%	(n = 111)
Concerns About Staff's Reactions	**17.0%**	**(n = 794)**
Students feel too embarrassed/uncomfortable/ashamed	5.8%	(n = 269)
Doubted staff would believe/take concerns seriously, didn't trust staff, or uncertain about staff reaction	4.1%	(n = 193)
Believe that teachers or other school staff are homophobic or transphobic	3.0%	(n = 138)
Fear of being blamed for the incident	1.5%	(n = 69)
Fear of being disciplined for the incident	1.3%	(n = 62)
Fear of being judged or treated differently	1.0%	(n = 45)
Teachers participate in harassment	0.7%	(n = 32)
Students concerned teachers wouldn't understand	0.6%	(n = 30)
Students Addressing Matters on Their Own	**8.9%**	**(n = 416)**
Barriers to Reporting Exist (e.g., lack of evidence)	**2.4%**	**(n = 114)**
Other Reasons for Not Reporting (e.g., unspecified fear, concern about getting friends in trouble)	**13.1%**	**(n = 610)**

*Because respondents could select multiple responses, categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages may not add up to 100%.

Feared Making the Situation Worse. Just under one quarter of students (23.7%) mentioned fears that reporting incidents of harassment and assault to school personnel would exacerbate the situation, as depicted in Table 1.3. About a tenth (9.7%) expressed explicit safety concerns, sometimes because their harassers had explicitly threatened retaliation:

> *Sometimes it seemed like it would only fan the flames… They were the kind of kids where if you told on them, it would only provoke them. –Cisgender female student, 11th grade, Texas*

> *While I do believe I should have [reported], I received threats of worse happening if I did. –Transgender male student, 10th grade, South Dakota*

> *The student body always somehow finds out about who reported what, and they get harassed worse than before. –Genderqueer student, 10th grade, Colorado*

Some students (7.9%) mentioned in more general ways that the reporting process itself could make the situation worse. These students feared what would happen if they told a staff person, and thus, they did not want to deal with the consequences of reporting. Several of these students did not want to draw attention to themselves or to "start trouble":

> *I didn't want to cause a scene and draw attention to myself. –Transgender male student, 9th grade, Pennsylvania*

> *I just didn't want to cause a scene; people already don't like me. I just want them to not hate me anymore. –Transgender female student, 11th grade, Michigan*

A smaller number of students (3.0%) wanted to avoid being labeled a "snitch" or "tattle-tale" because the accompanying peer disapproval and added harassment would make the situation worse:

> *I did not want to seem like a "baby" or a "snitch" to those who harassed me or to staff. –Cisgender female student, 10th grade, Maine*

> *I didn't want to feel like "that kid" always snitching or telling on people. –Cisgender male student, 9th grade, Washington*

Other students (4.4%) did not report incidents of harassment or assault to school authorities due to concerns about confidentiality. Many of these students were specifically concerned about potentially being "outed" or that if school staff contacted their parents, it may cause problems at home:

> *I don't feel comfortable talking with them about it. They will call my parents, who are not ok with how I express my gender. –Transgender female student, 11th grade, Colorado*

> *I haven't reported it because of the fact that I'm not openly gay yet, especially in my school. I fear that if I were to report it, the teachers may out me. –Genderqueer student, 8th grade, North Carolina*

> *A staff member was making me feel uncomfortable and threatened and unsafe, and I could not report anything without the school alerting my parents, who are not accepting of my gender identity. –Transgender male student, 11th grade, Illinois*

Perceptions of the Severity of Harassment. About a fifth of students (19.3%) explained that they did not report incidents of victimization to school personnel because they did not consider it to be serious enough to them, or because they had grown accustomed to being bullied:

> *It wasn't important. The people are annoying but you get over it when you have friends. –Cisgender male student, 8th grade, Texas*

"It got to the point where it would take all the courage in me to report it, and they wouldn't even care. Sometimes there is no point in trying."

I sometimes feel that I wasn't harassed "enough" to report. –Genderqueer student, 8th grade, Tennessee

Sometimes it isn't a big enough deal to report, and I didn't feel like taking my time just to report a small thing. –Cisgender male, 11th grade, Oklahoma

Because we lack specific details about the actual incidents of victimization, we cannot examine whether only those events that were truly minor were perceived as "not a big deal." We did find that students who reported that the harassment they experienced was "not a big deal" did have lower levels of victimization overall than other students.[22] Nevertheless, these students did experience victimization in school, and for some, the victimization included physical assault — arguably a "big deal" under any circumstances.[23]

"I'm so used to being called a 'fag' and 'queer' that it stopped hurting as much."

Concerned about Staff Members' Reactions. Nearly a fifth (17.0%) of students expressed concerns about how teachers would react to them because of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression if they reported the harassment or assault. Most commonly, they expressed feeling too uncomfortable or embarrassed to report the incident (5.8%); most simply said, "it is embarrassing" and/or "too uncomfortable [to report]." A few students elaborated on why reporting to staff would be an uncomfortable experience, such as:

I don't like to talk to authority figures and it makes me even more anxious. –Transgender male student, 10th grade, Maryland

The extra attention brought on to the incident would be uncomfortable for me. –Cisgender male student, 11th grade, Texas

A number of students (4.1%) expressed apprehension about interacting with school staff when reporting incidents of victimization. Some thought that staff would not believe their reports or take the situation seriously, and others mentioned more general apprehension about reporting, such as distrusting school staff members generally, not having enough information about school policies or staff stances on anti-LGBT harassment, or simply being uncertain about what would happen if they reported:

I'm one of the outcast students; the people who do bully me are the popular preps, and their word will surely be taken over mine. –Cisgender female student, 11th grade, California

I felt that no one really cared or would believe me since it wasn't how the student normally acted. –Cisgender female student, 10th grade, Virginia

I feel like nobody will understand or think it's a big deal. –Transgender male student, 9th grade, Massachusetts

Because I don't like to talk to staff in my school and I can't trust them. –Student questioning their gender identity, 8th grade, New York

I don't trust teachers. They never know what they are doing. –Cisgender male student, 10th grade, Texas

A number of students (3.0%) were deterred from reporting victimization because they thought that school personnel were homophobic or transphobic themselves, and therefore would not be helpful. Many of these students reported a general sense of anti-LGBT sentiment among staff, but some also specifically mentioned past negative experiences:

I felt that the teacher at the time didn't support my gender identity, so I assumed the teacher wouldn't help me at all. –Transgender male student, 11th grade, Washington

It's a Christian school. The teacher didn't care, and even told kids to watch out for me because she thought I would turn them gay. –Cisgender male student, 12th grade, Alabama

A few LGBT students cited concerns about school staff taking the side of the perpetrator of harassment and/or being blamed for the incident by school staff, or even that they would be disciplined for reporting (1.8%):

"Almost all of the time, I would end up being the one in trouble because it's 'my fault for drawing negative attention to myself.'"

> *Twice upon reporting it I was given the same punishment or a more severe punishment than the [student] doing the harassing. –Cisgender male student, 11th grade, Iowa*

A smaller number of students (1.0%) expressed concerns that they would be judged or treated differently by school personnel if they were to report incidents of harassment and assault:

> *I think that if I tell them I've been bullied for any reason, they might judge me or think less of me. –Cisgender female student, 10th grade, New Jersey*

> *I don't want [school staff] to know about anything because they might judge me, too. –Cisgender female student, 11th grade, California*

A small number of students (less than 1.0%) reported that school staff were actually perpetrators of harassment, potentially leaving students to feel there is no recourse for addressing incidents of victimization:

> *A staff member was making me feel uncomfortable and threatened and unsafe, and I could not report anything without the school alerting my parents, who are not accepting of my gender identity. –Transgender male student, 11th grade, Illinois*

These responses about staff being perpetrators of harassment are particularly disturbing and underscore the negative school climate many LGBT students experience. Victimization by teachers, while troubling enough on its own, can cause additional harm when witnessed by other students by sending a message that harassment is acceptable in the classroom or school community. Harassment of students by school personnel also serves as a reminder that safer schools efforts must address all members of the school community and not just the student body.

LGBT students' perception that educators are unable to recognize or relate to their situations underscores the importance of school personnel taking steps that let students know they will not tolerate anti-LGBT harassment and that they are supportive of LGBT students. If school staff send the message that they will respond to incidents of victimization and that they are supportive of LGBT students more generally, students may be more likely to report incidents of harassment and assault. In order to create safer school environments for LGBT students, it is crucial that teachers, social workers, and all other school personnel receive adequate training and support about how to effectively address the victimization that so many of these youth experience.

Students Addressing Matters on Their Own. We found that almost one tenth (8.9%) of students said that they handled incidents of harassment or assault themselves. Many respondents simply stated that they "took care of it," and some emphasized their self-reliance in handling the situation:

> *I felt like I handled the situation very well. NO VIOLENCE, I calmly spoke my peace and walked away. –Transgender female student, 11th grade, Alabama*

> *I can handle it. Going and ratting doesn't solve anything. It shows weakness, and bullies pounce on weakness. –Cisgender male student, 11th grade, Oregon*

Some students specifically mentioned resorting to physical retaliation to deal with victimization. For example, a cisgender female student in 11th grade in New Jersey said that she doesn't report "because I beat them up for it and do not feel like getting detention for violent retaliation." Although it is troubling that any student would resort to physical retaliation to deal with victimization, the number of students who indicated doing so was quite small.

A few students reported that when it comes to dealing with incidents of harassment and assault, they felt that the best strategy was to simply ignore

the incident or act as if they were not bothered by the incident:

> *I dismissed it. I learned that they get amusement out of [my response], so I just started to ignore it. –Student with another gender, 9th grade, Michigan*

> *I felt if I ignored the person long enough they would leave me alone. –Cisgender female student, 8th grade, Kentucky*

Although it is possible that ignoring or acting undisturbed by harassment could be an effective strategy in some situations, it is also possible that appearing unaffected may prevent some students from accessing important resources and supports in cases of harassment. Further research is needed to explore the possible negative consequences of not reporting or ignoring harassment.

Obstacles Encountered in Reporting Harassment or Assault. A small percentage of students (2.4%) cited obstacles that prevented them from reporting incidents of harassment and assault, such as not having proof or evidence of being victimized, procedural barriers to reporting, or a lack of support from school staff throughout the reporting process:

> *The harassment is usually an inappropriate comment made as I'm walking in the hallways. I can't put a name to the person doing the harassing. –Genderqueer student, 11th grade, Michigan*

> *My school functions inefficiently under heavy bureaucracy, and things don't get done. –Cisgender female student, 12th grade, Illinois*

"The time I did report, the process of being heard was more demeaning than the harassment."

Some students chose to not report based on their schools' zero-tolerance harassment/assault policies, and they knew that they'd be disciplined for "fighting" if they reported being the target of physical harassment:

> *A zero tolerance [policy] is enforced; if someone is bullied he/she is suspended for trying to defend herself/himself. –Genderqueer student, 9th grade, Arizona*

> *My school has a terrible zero-tolerance policy. Even if you didn't do anything, if you were involved in any way, you get in trouble. –Transgender male student, 10th grade, Maine*

These responses highlight some of the potential consequences of zero-tolerance school harassment/assault policies that require harsh, automatic discipline procedures. Some students who have been victimized based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression may not report incidents of assault or harassment because they believe that these policies prevent educators from handling the situation fairly. Therefore, it is critical that schools adopt and enforce policies that allow educators to consider situational context in discipline matters and that do not impose automatic, arbitrary punishment upon students.

In order to create a safe learning environment for all students, schools should work toward appropriately and effectively responding to incidents of victimization. Many of the reasons students gave for not reporting victimization could be addressed through more intentional policies and practices. School staff should respond to each incident brought to their attention, as well as inform victims of the action that was taken. Training all members of the school community to be sensitive to LGBT student issues and effectively respond to bullying and harassment, in addition to doing away with zero-tolerance policies that lead to automatic discipline of targets of harassment and assault, could increase the likelihood of reporting by students who are victimized at school. Such efforts could, in turn, improve school climate for all students.

Students' Reports on the Nature of School Staff's Responses to Harassment and Assault

Most LGBT students never reported incidents of harassment and assault to school personnel. Nevertheless, nearly half (43.3%) had done so at least once in the past year (see Figure 1.19). We asked those students what school staff did to handle the incident they reported most recently (see Table 1.4). The most common responses were: 1) the staff member did nothing and/or told the

reporting student to ignore the victimization; 2) the staff member talked to the perpetrator about the incident; and 3) the staff contacted the parents of at least one of the involved students.

Disciplinary action to address reported incidents occurred less commonly, and may sometimes be improperly applied against the target of harassment. Approximately one fifth of students (19.4%) reporting harassment indicated that the perpetrator was disciplined by school staff, but unfortunately, about one in ten students (9.8%) reported that they themselves were disciplined when they reported being victimized.

Failing to intervene when harassment is reported, blaming students for their own victimization, and other inappropriate responses to reports of harassment and assault are unacceptable and potentially harmful to students who experience victimization. An educator's failure to follow through with effective action after making a commitment to a student to address an instance of bullying may be worse than doing nothing at all, as it may erode a student's trust in school staff. As discussed above, many of the students who did not report incidents of harassment or assault to school authorities feared exactly these negative outcomes. Thus, staff members who do not address reports of student victimization may not only fail to help the student who is victimized, but also discourage other students from reporting when they are harassed or assaulted at school.

Table 1.4 LGBT Students' Reports of School Staff's Responses to Reports of Harassment and Assault (n = 2372)

	Students Reporting Specific Response*	
	%	number
Staff Did Nothing/Took No Action and/or Told the Student to Ignore It	**61.6%**	**(n = 1460)**
Staff Talked to Perpetrator/Told Perpetrator to Stop	**45.6%**	**(n = 1081)**
Parents were Contacted	**27.2%**	**(n = 646)**
Staff contacted the reporting student's parents	16.0%	(n = 380)
Staff contacted the perpetrator's parents	11.2%	(n = 266)
Perpetrator was Disciplined (e.g., detention, suspension)	**19.4%**	**(n = 461)**
Staff or Student Filed a Report of the Incident	**18.2%**	**(n = 431)**
Incident was Referred to Another Staff Person	**17.1%**	**(n = 405)**
The Reporting Student and Perpetrator were Separated From Each Other	**16.9%**	**(n = 402)**
Staff Attempted to Educate Students about Bullying	**15.1%**	**(n = 359)**
Staff educated the perpetrator about bullying	7.6%	(n = 181)
Staff educated the whole class or school about bullying	7.5%	(n = 178)
Used Peer Mediation or Conflict Resolution Approach	**9.9%**	**(n = 234)**
The Reporting Student was Disciplined (e.g., detention, suspension)	**9.8%**	**(n = 233)**
Other Responses (e.g., told me I had to change my behavior, talked to me about my feelings)	**7.1%**	**(n = 169)**

*Because respondents could select multiple responses, categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages may not add up to 100%.

Effectiveness of Staff Responses to Harassment and Assault

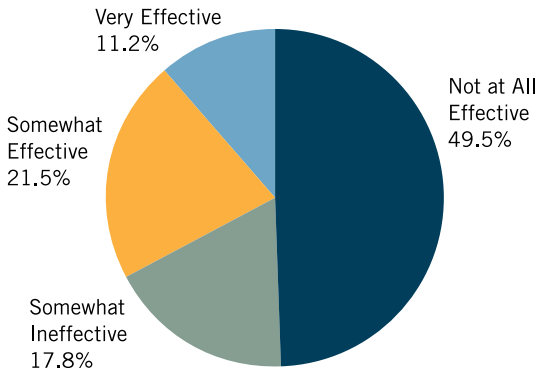
Students in our survey who said that they had reported incidents of harassment and assault to school staff were also asked how effective staff members were in addressing the problem. As shown in Figure 1.21, only one third (32.7%) of students believed that staff responded effectively to their reports of victimization. Students were more likely to report that staff members' responses were effective when: 1) staff took disciplinary action against the perpetrator, 2) staff contacted the perpetrator's parents, and 3) staff educated either the perpetrator or the whole class/school generally about bullying.[24]

Students were most likely to report that staff response was ineffective when: 1) staff disciplined the student who reported the incident, 2) staff did nothing to address the incident and/or told the reporting student to ignore the harassment, 3) staff contacted the reporting student's parents, and 4) staff attempted peer mediation/conflict resolution.[25] Although these results may indicate a lack of caring on the part of staff, they also may be indicative of school staff who are well-meaning but misinformed about effective intervention strategies for cases of bullying and harassment. For example, peer mediation and conflict resolution strategies, in which students speak to each other about an incident, are only effective in situations where conflict is among students with equal social power. Peer mediation that emphasizes that all involved parties contribute to conflict can be ineffective, and at worst, revictimize the targeted student when there is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. When harassment is bias-based, as in a case of anti-LGBT harassment, there is almost by definition an imbalance of power.[26]

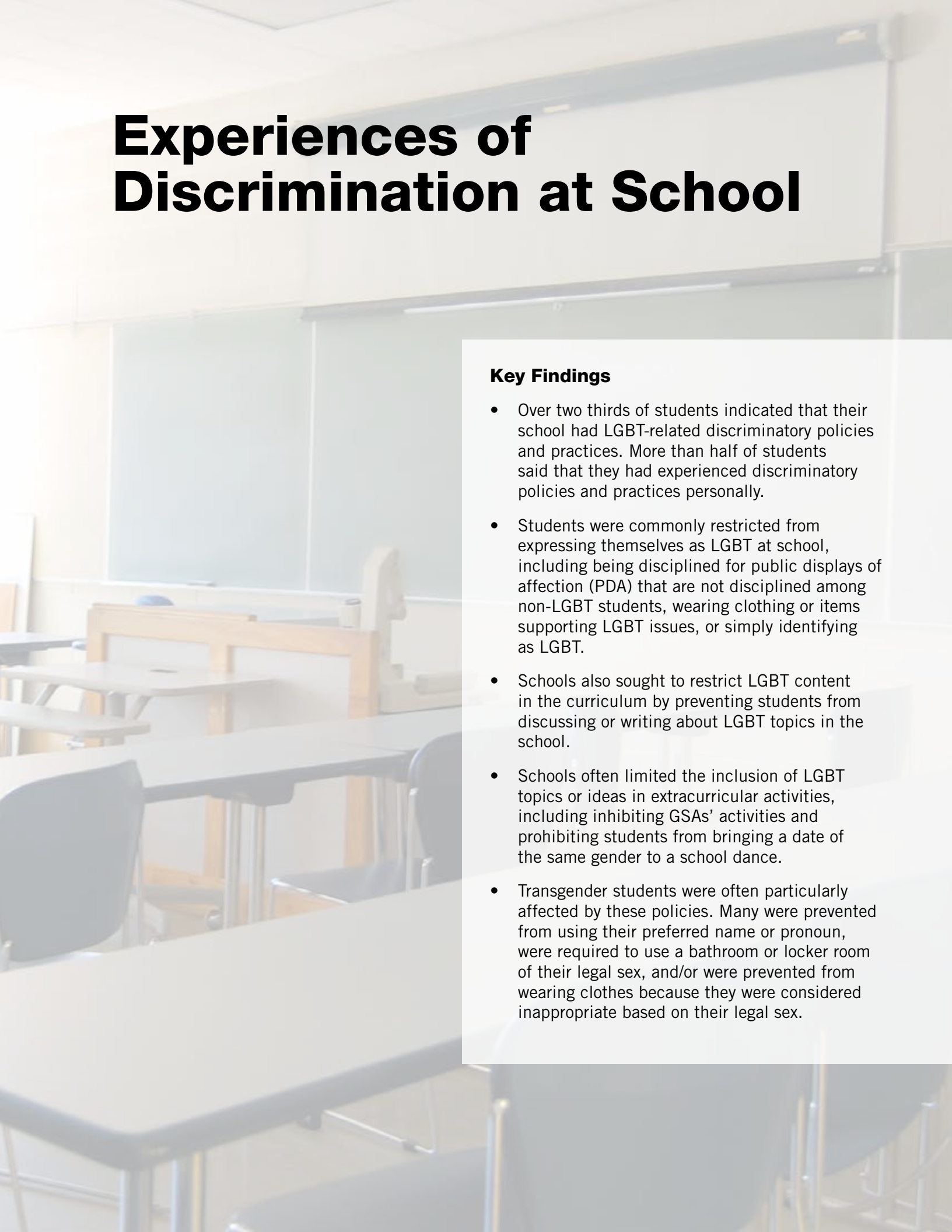
School personnel are charged with providing a safe learning environment for all students. In this survey, the most common reason for not reporting harassment or assault was the belief that nothing would be done. Even when students reported incidents of victimization, the most common staff response mentioned was to merely tell the student to ignore it. By not effectively addressing harassment and assault, students who are victimized are denied an adequate opportunity to learn. It is particularly troubling that a small number of students were told by school staff that, because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, they somehow brought the problem upon themselves. This type of response may exacerbate an already hostile school climate for LGBT students and deters them from reporting future incidents of harassment or assault.

When students reported incidents of harassment or assault to staff members, the interventions had varying degrees of effectiveness. Given that we do not know the circumstances of each instance of harassment or assault or the reasons why students would characterize a response as effective or not, we are not able to know details about what made certain staff responses (e.g., talking to the perpetrator) more effective than others (e.g., whether it resulted in an end to the harassment and/or made the student feel more supported in school). However, general professional development about bullying and harassment may not be enough to equip educators with the ability to address anti-LGBT victimization specifically. For example, previous GLSEN research has found that educators who received general professional development on bullying and harassment without specific LGBT content were no more likely to address anti-LGBT behaviors than educators who had not received professional development on bullying and harassment.[27] School- or district-wide educator professional development trainings on issues specifically related to LGBT students and bias-based bullying and harassment may better equip educators with tools for effectively intervening in instances of bullying of LGBT students. In addition, such trainings may help educators become more aware of the experiences of LGBT students, including incidents of harassment and bullying, which could play a vital role in improving LGBT students' school experiences.

Figure 1.21 LGBT Students' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Staff Response to Incidents of Harassment and Assault (n = 2361)



Experiences of Discrimination at School



Key Findings

- Over two thirds of students indicated that their school had LGBT-related discriminatory policies and practices. More than half of students said that they had experienced discriminatory policies and practices personally.
- Students were commonly restricted from expressing themselves as LGBT at school, including being disciplined for public displays of affection (PDA) that are not disciplined among non-LGBT students, wearing clothing or items supporting LGBT issues, or simply identifying as LGBT.
- Schools also sought to restrict LGBT content in the curriculum by preventing students from discussing or writing about LGBT topics in the school.
- Schools often limited the inclusion of LGBT topics or ideas in extracurricular activities, including inhibiting GSAs' activities and prohibiting students from bringing a date of the same gender to a school dance.
- Transgender students were often particularly affected by these policies. Many were prevented from using their preferred name or pronoun, were required to use a bathroom or locker room of their legal sex, and/or were prevented from wearing clothes because they were considered inappropriate based on their legal sex.

"My relationship with my girlfriend is viewed differently than a heterosexual relationship. We get reprimanded for holding hands, when down the hallway, a heterosexual couple is making out."

Hearing homophobic and negative remarks about gender expression in the hallways and directly experiencing victimization from other students clearly contribute to a hostile climate for LGBT students. Additionally, some school policies and practices, although less overt than some of these student behaviors, may also contribute to negative experiences for LGBT students and make them feel as if they are not valued by their school communities. In our 2011 survey, we asked students an open-ended question about discriminatory policies and practices at their school. From these responses, we created a close-ended question for our 2013 survey based on the most commonly reported discriminatory policies and practices from 2011. We asked students about their own direct experiences and about the experiences of their peers. Over two thirds of students (68.1%) indicated that students at their school had experienced LGBT-related discrimination, with more than half of students (55.5%) saying that they had personally experienced these types of discriminatory policies and practices, and two thirds (65.2%) reporting that other students had (see Figure 1.22).

Restricting LGBT Expression in School

Many of the policies and practices we asked about involved efforts to restrict students from identifying as LGBT and from being themselves in the school environment. More than one third of students (38.9%) said that their schools had disciplined LGBT students for public affection that is not similarly disciplined among non-LGBT students, including 28.2% who had experienced it personally. In addition, 19.2% said they had been prevented from wearing clothing deemed "inappropriate" based on their gender (e.g., a boy wearing a dress); 34.2% said this had been true of other students at their school. Almost a quarter of students (24.0%) indicated that their schools had prevented them from wearing clothing or items supporting LGBT issues (e.g., a t-shirt with a rainbow flag), with 15.5% of students reporting that they personally had been prevented from wearing such clothing. In addition, 9.2% of students said they had been disciplined simply for identifying as LGBT or disciplined more harshly compared to non-LGBT students.

Prohibiting LGBT Content in the Curriculum

Schools also maintained policies and practices that sought to keep classrooms, events, and other official school spaces devoid of LGBT content or people. Such policies maintain a silence around LGBT issues and could have the effect of further stigmatizing LGBT people. Nearly one quarter of students (23.5%) said students had been prevented from choosing to discuss or write about LGBT topics in class assignments and projects, including 17.5% who had experienced it personally.

Limiting LGBT Inclusion in Extracurricular Activities

Slightly less than one fifth of LGBT students (17.8%) had been hindered in forming or promoting a GSA or official school club supportive of LGBT issues, and 27.6% said their schools prevented students from attending a school dance with someone of the same gender (18.1% personally; 27.0% among other students at school). By marking official school involvement and activities distinctly as non-LGBT, these types of discrimination prevent LGBT students from participating in the school community as fully and completely as other students.

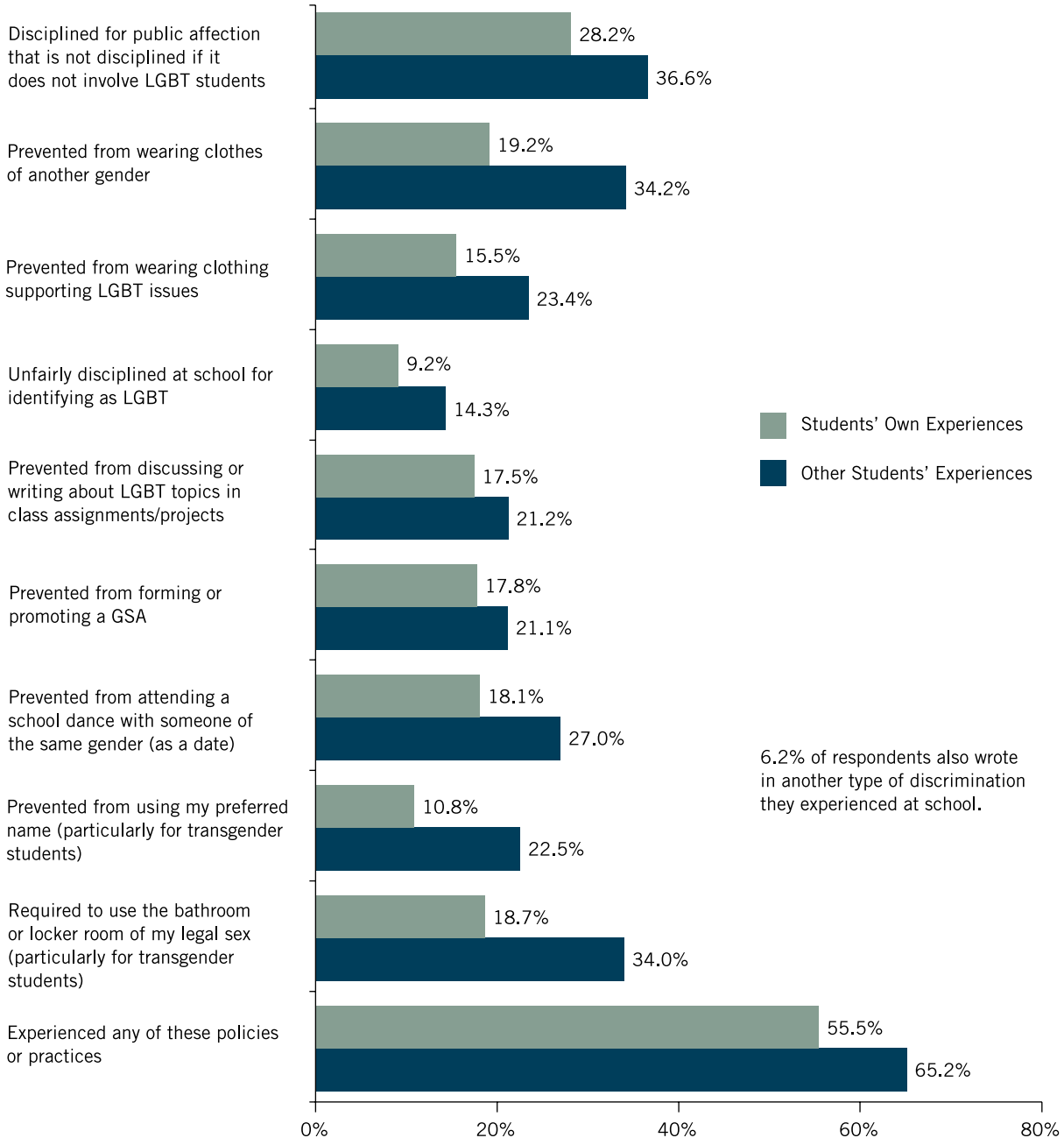
"My school doesn't have a GSA, and a teacher and I have been trying to start one all year. The principal says no and has a million reasons why."

Enforcing Adherence to Traditional Gender Norms

Other policies appeared to target students' gender in ways that likely affected transgender and other non-cisgender students (e.g., genderqueer students) disproportionately. Nearly one fourth of students (23.0%) said that students at their school had been prevented from using their preferred name (10.8% personally, 22.5% among other students), and just over one third (34.5%) said that students at their school had unwillingly been required to use the bathroom of their legal sex (18.7% personally, 34.0% among other students). These policies were disproportionately reported by transgender students:[28]

- 42.2% of transgender students had been personally prevented from using their preferred name;

Figure 1.22 Percentage of LGBT Students who Have Experienced Discriminatory Policies and Practices at School



- 59.2% of transgender students had been required to use the bathroom or locker room of their legal sex; and
- 31.6% of transgender students had been prevented from wearing clothes because they were considered inappropriate based on their legal sex.

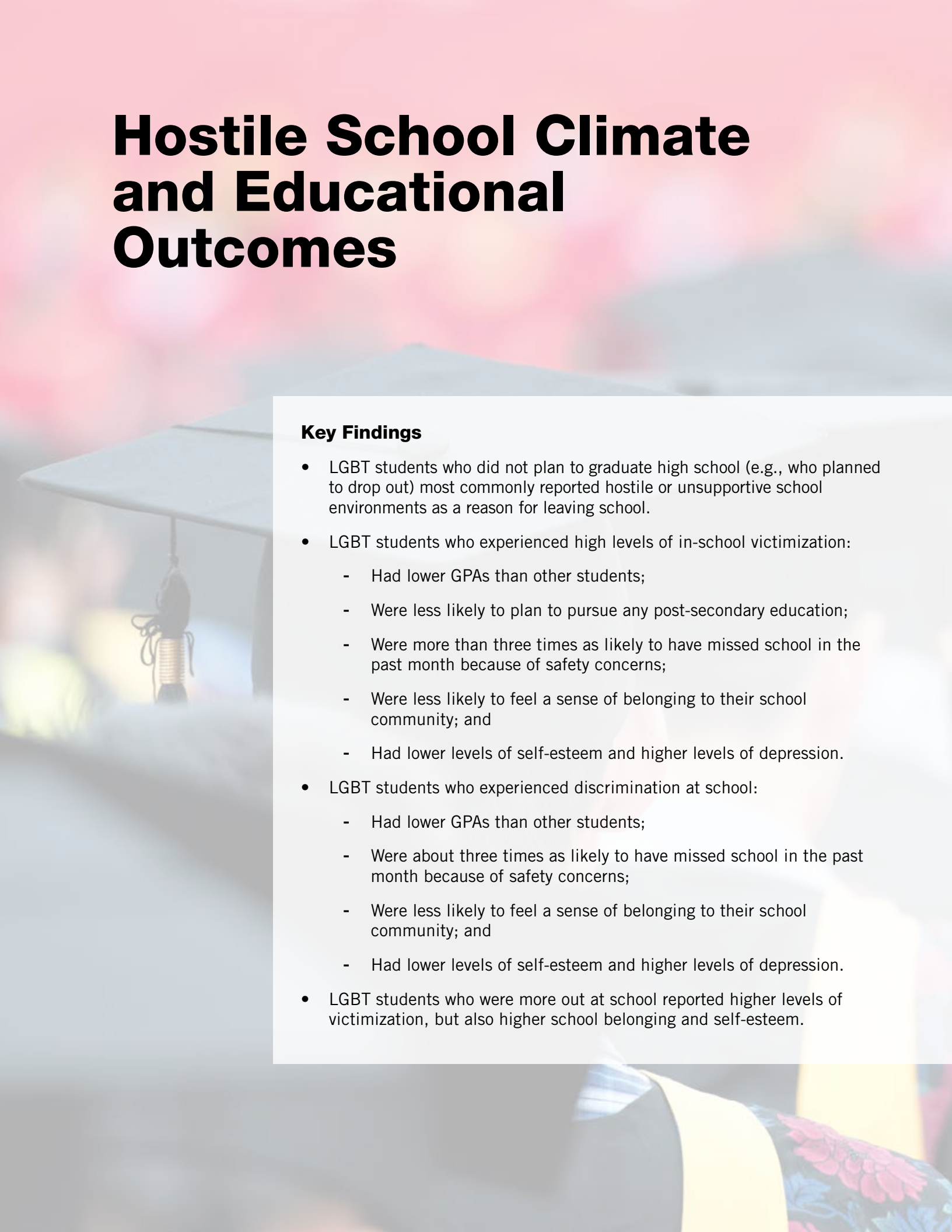
Other Discriminatory School Policies and Practices

In addition to the policies and practices about which we specifically asked, we also asked students if there were any other policies or practices at their school that they believed discriminated against LGBT students and 10.7% of students described additional discriminatory school policies and practices:

- Activities and spaces that segregated students based on gender (e.g., health classes and "Senior Superlatives" that were separated by gender);
- Restriction from sports activities or suggestions that LGBT students not participate;
- Violations of student privacy (e.g., schools notified parents about students' LGBT identities without their consent);
- Events or activities that disparaged or made light of nonconforming gender expression (e.g., School Spirit Days that encouraged males to dress up as females and vice versa);
- Not taking action to make school climates better, e.g., staff members' own use of biased language, non-intervention in anti-LGBT harassment, and non-inclusive anti-bullying policies and curricula (see sections *Exposure to Biased Language, Reporting of School-Based Harassment and Assault*, and *Availability of School-Based Resources and Supports* for more information on these topics); and
- Prohibition on staff from taking a more active role in supporting LGBT students (e.g., preventing LGBT staff from coming out themselves).

"Most of the LGBT kids at my school are not allowed to go to prom as couples. Many of them, in order to get discounted tickets, are taking friends of the opposite sex and meeting with their significant other once they arrive."

Hostile School Climate and Educational Outcomes



Key Findings

- LGBT students who did not plan to graduate high school (e.g., who planned to drop out) most commonly reported hostile or unsupportive school environments as a reason for leaving school.
- LGBT students who experienced high levels of in-school victimization:
  - Had lower GPAs than other students;
  - Were less likely to plan to pursue any post-secondary education;
  - Were more than three times as likely to have missed school in the past month because of safety concerns;
  - Were less likely to feel a sense of belonging to their school community; and
  - Had lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of depression.
- LGBT students who experienced discrimination at school:
  - Had lower GPAs than other students;
  - Were about three times as likely to have missed school in the past month because of safety concerns;
  - Were less likely to feel a sense of belonging to their school community; and
  - Had lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of depression.
- LGBT students who were more out at school reported higher levels of victimization, but also higher school belonging and self-esteem.

Although all students deserve equal access to education, LGBT students can face a variety of obstacles to academic success and opportunity. Given the hostile climates encountered by LGBT students (documented in the sections *School Safety*, *Exposure to Biased Language*, *Experiences of Harassment and Assault at School*, and *Experiences of Discrimination at School*), it is understandable that some students could have poorer outcomes in school. For instance, prior research has found lower educational aspirations among LGBT students than their peers, and that unsafe or unwelcoming school environments may contribute to such outcomes.[29] In this section, we examine in closer detail the educational experiences of LGBT students, particularly how they might be affected by hostile school climate.

Educational Aspirations and Future Plans

In order to examine the relationship between school climate and educational outcomes, we asked students about their aspirations with regard to post-secondary education, including plans to graduate versus dropping out of school, as well as their highest level of expected educational attainment and intended field of study beyond high school.

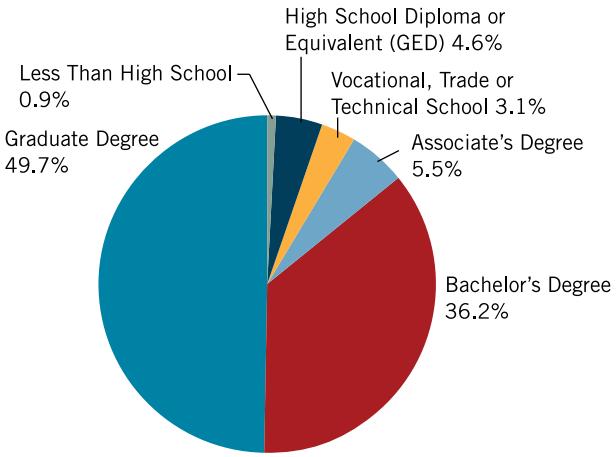
Educational Aspirations. When asked about their aspirations with regard to post-secondary education, only 5.5% of LGBT students indicated that they did not plan to pursue any type of post-secondary education (i.e., that they only planned to obtain a high school diploma, did not plan to finish high school, or were unsure of their plans). Half of students (49.7%) reported that they planned to pursue a graduate degree (e.g., Master's degree, PhD, or MD), and another 36.2% said that they planned to obtain a college degree (e.g., Bachelor's degree; see Figure 1.23). It is important to note that the 2013 NSCS only included students who were in school during the 2012–2013 school year. Thus, the percentage of LGBT students not pursuing post-secondary education would be higher with the inclusion of students who had already dropped out of high school.

High School Completion. As shown in Figure 1.23, less than 1% of LGBT students reported that they had no plans of obtaining a high school degree or equivalent, yet there were more students who planned on dropping out of high school but who also planned on obtaining a GED, with many also planning on post-secondary education afterwards. Altogether, 3.4% of LGBT students who participated in the 2013 National School Climate Survey said that they did not plan to graduate high school and earn a diploma or were unsure if they would graduate. Even though most of these students did indicate that they still planned to earn diploma-equivalent certification via General Education Development (GED) testing, it is important to note that some research on high school equivalency certification in the general student population suggests that GED equivalencies are not associated with the same educational attainment and earning potential as high school diplomas.[30] Thus, more research is needed to better understand if LGBT students' educational and career plans may be similarly impeded if they are unable to earn high school diplomas because of hostile school climates.

To better understand why LGBT students would not finish high school, we asked those students who indicated they were not planning on completing high school or were not sure if they would graduate about their reasons for leaving school (see Table 1.5).

By far the most common reason LGBT students cited for not planning to graduate or being unsure if they would graduate was an unsupportive or hostile school environment. As shown in Table 1.5, over half (57.9%) of the students who provided reasons for leaving high school said that elements of hostile or unsupportive school climates were a barrier to completing high school.

Figure 1.23 Educational Aspirations of LGBT Students



Many students in this category mentioned negative experiences at school and/or feeling alienated from their school communities without providing specific information about their circumstances, often with statements such as "I can't stand it" or "it's not worth it." Some LGBT students were more specific about their experiences of harassment and assault at school and/or explained that they felt unsafe in their school environments:

> *I'm not sure if I can deal with the hate for the full four years. I've been dealing with the hitting and kicking for too long. –Cisgender female student, 8th grade, Delaware*

A few students specifically indicated that their peers and/or educators were unsupportive or hostile:

> *I feel that the high school does not have anything for me. Most of the students are homophobic, bigots, etc. –Cisgender male student, 8th grade, Connecticut*

A few also reported that they felt uncomfortable with school policies about gender:

> *I have to take gym, and I don't feel safe in the locker rooms. I know people will stare at me no matter which locker room I am in. –Genderqueer student, 10th grade, West Virginia*

The second most common reason LGBT students planned to leave school or were unsure about graduating was concerns about academic achievement and meeting graduation requirements. A fifth (21.8%) listed these concerns; the majority of these students mentioned struggles with grades, and others cited not having earned the credits required to graduate and/or missing too much class, often because they felt too unsafe to attend:

> *I have failed the last three years because I didn't go to school because I didn't feel comfortable there, so it's all a matter of making my grades up. –Cisgender female student, 11th grade, Utah*

Table 1.5 Reasons LGBT Students Do Not Plan to Graduate High School or Are Unsure If They Will Graduate (n = 209)

	Students Reporting Specific Response*	
	%	number
Hostile or Unsupportive School Environment	**57.9%**	**(n = 117)**
• Experiences of harassment/assault and/or feeling unsafe at school		
• Hostile peers		
• Unsupportive or hostile school staff		
• Gendered school policies/practices (e.g., forced to use locker rooms/ bathrooms of sex assigned at birth instead of gender identity)		
Concerns about Meeting Academic Requirements	**21.8%**	**(n = 44)**
• Poor grades		
• Too many absences		
• Concerns about earning enough credits to graduate		
Mental Health Concerns (e.g., depression, anxiety, stress)	**19.8%**	**(n = 40)**
Alternative Plans to High School Education	**7.4%**	**(n = 15)**
• Believe a high school diploma to be irrelevant to future plans		
• Plan to join the workforce		
Family Issues (e.g., unsupportive home environment, family crises)	**3.5%**	**(n = 7)**
Other reasons (e.g., plans to run away, lack of motivation)	**9.4%**	**(n = 19)**

*Because respondents could select multiple responses, categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages may not add up to 100%.

"My school has a policy that you can only have two unexcused absences, otherwise you lose credit. I skip school a lot due to harassment and feeling uncomfortable at school."

About a fifth (19.8%) of the LGBT students who did not plan to graduate or were not sure about graduating identified mental health struggles as a barrier to graduation. Many mentioned a mental health diagnosis such as depression or anxiety, and a few students cited experiencing high levels of stress in the school environment:

> *I have been so viciously tortured in public school that I now have severe anxiety and can no longer cope with the panic attacks and thoughts that plague me while I'm there. –Cisgender male student, 11th grade, Wisconsin*

These quotes also illustrate how for some students in our survey, concerns about academic achievement and/or mental health were directly related to their experiences of a hostile school climate.

Another group of students (7.4%) mentioned that they had alternative plans to completing high school, most commonly that a high school diploma was irrelevant to their futures:

> *I don't need a diploma to do what I want after high school. –Genderfluid student, 10th grade, Rhode Island*

> *I plan on getting my GED so that I can spend more time with my boyfriend and work towards our farm. –Transgender male high school student, Washington*

A few LGBT students (3.5%) mentioned that their families were unsupportive and they might be forced to leave home, or that family issues unrelated to being LGBT may force them to leave school. One 10th grade cisgender female student from Illinois said, "I'm taking care of my younger siblings, and there is way too much drama in high school to deal with on top of taking care of three children plus myself." An additional group of students (9.4%) cited various other reasons why they did not plan to finish high school, including plans to run away and a lack of motivation.

Intended Post-Secondary Field of Study. LGBT students who indicated that they were planning on pursuing any additional education after high school were asked an open-ended question about their intended field of study or college major.[31] As shown in Table 1.6, the most common areas of study reported were the visual and performing arts (23.6%), health (12.9%), and psychology (12.4%).

There has been increasing attention to how diversity at the college/university level can influence a student's decision-making with regard to their major field of study.[32] For LGBT students, the potential for a hostile school environment may negatively affect their overall relationship to education. But also, there may be fields that may be perceived as more accepting of sexuality and gender diversity. In order to examine whether LGBT students differ from the general population in terms of their academic interests, we compared the intended college majors of those seniors in our sample who were planning on pursuing at least a four-year degree with available national norms on entering first-year college students where there were equivalent college major categories. For this comparison, we used 2013 national norms from the CIRP Freshman Survey, conducted by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA on entering college first-year students.[33] (The CIRP Freshman Survey is annually administered to entering students during orientation or registration at hundreds of colleges and universities throughout the U.S.) Although our National School Climate Survey (NSCS) allowed for students to indicate multiple majors and the CIRP survey allowed only one major, this comparison may still provide some insight into differences in intended academic trajectory between LGBT students and the general population. As shown in Figure 1.24, there were some significant and striking differences between LGBT high school seniors and the entering general population of college freshmen. LGBT students were significantly more likely to be interested in the Arts and Humanities, Math and Computers,

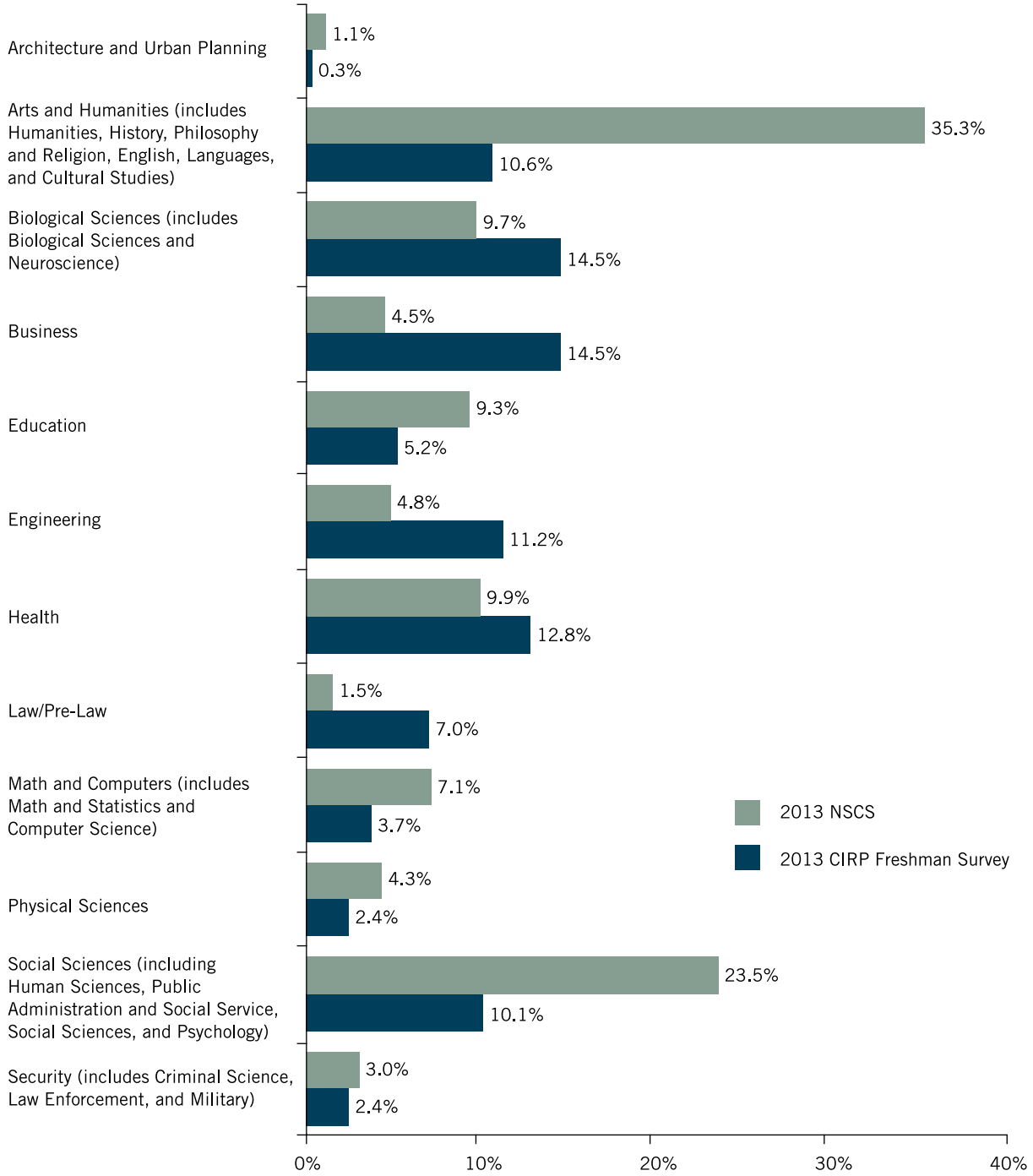
Table 1.6 Intended Field of Study/College Major among LGBT Students Planning to Pursue Post-Secondary Education* (n = 6285)

	Students Reporting Specific Response**	
	%	number
Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences	0.7%	(n = 44)
Architecture and Related Services	1.0%	(n = 63)
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	6.3%	(n = 396)
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	4.1%	(n = 258)
Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs	4.2%	(n = 264)
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	4.8%	(n = 302)
Construction Trades, Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians	0.6%	(n = 38)
Education	8.0%	(n = 503)
Engineering and Engineering Technologies	4.5%	(n = 283)
English Language and Literature/Letters	7.0%	(n = 440)
Ethnic, Cultural, and Gender Studies	1.8%	(n = 113)
Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences	0.4%	(n = 25)
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	3.1%	(n = 195)
Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences	**12.9%**	**(n = 811)**
History	1.9%	(n = 119)
Legal Professions and Studies	2.9%	(n = 182)
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	0.4%	(n = 25)
Library Science	0.2%	(n = 13)
Mathematics and Statistics	1.3%	(n = 82)
Military Technologies	0.3%	(n = 19)
Natural Resources and Conservation	0.9%	(n = 57)
Parks, Recreation, Leisure and Fitness Studies	0.2%	(n = 13)
Personal and Culinary Services	4.1%	(n = 258)
Philosophy and Religious Studies and Religious Vocations	0.5%	(n = 31)
Physical Sciences	3.4%	(n = 214)
Psychology	**12.4%**	**(n = 779)**
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	1.7%	(n = 107)
Security and Protective Services	2.7%	(n = 170)
Social Sciences	6.6%	(n = 415)
Transportation and Materials Moving	0.3%	(n = 19)
Visual and Performing Arts	**23.6%**	**(n = 1483)**
Other Science Major	1.5%	(n = 94)
Other Major	0.4%	(n = 25)
Don't Know/No Answer	6.0%	(n = 377)

*Bold = Top three fields of study.
**Because respondents could select multiple responses, categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages may not add up to 100%.

Education, and Social Sciences and less likely to be interested in Business, Engineering, and Law.[34–35] Overall LGBT students appeared to be less inclined toward the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields than the general population (23.6% of NSCS participants vs. 34.3% of CIRP participants), although there were some STEM fields that LGBT students were as interested or more interested in than the general population, specifically the Physical Sciences and

Figure 1.24 Comparison of Intended College Major between LGBT High School Seniors and General Population College Freshmen



*Source: The CIRP Freshman Survey. Eagan, K., Lozano, J. B., Hurtado, S., & Case, M. H. (2013). The American freshman: National norms fall 2013. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institution, UCLA.

Math and Computers. There were no meaningful differences between LGBT students and the general population on Health and Security majors.

We are uncertain as to why LGBT students are inclined toward some fields of study and disinclined toward others. It may be that these students have negative impressions of these fields as less welcoming or tolerant of sexuality and gender diversity. It may be that students are more likely to be exposed to positive LGBT content in certain content areas, such as English or Social Studies, and thus have more positive perceptions regarding their acceptance of LGBT people in those fields (see the *Insight on LGBT-Inclusive High School Curricula and LGBT Students' Intended College Major*). It is also interesting to note that whereas most LGBT students report having at least some difficulties regarding school climate, they appeared to be more likely to be interested in pursuing elementary and secondary education fields than the general population. It is possible that many students are motivated by their own school climate experiences to work first-hand on creating better learning environments for future generations of LGBT students. More exploration is needed to better understand the post-secondary educational pursuits of LGBT students.

Effects of a Hostile School Climate

School victimization and experiences of discrimination at school can hinder a students' academic success and educational aspirations as well as undermine their sense of belonging to their school community. Thus, we examined whether experiences of LGBT-related victimization and discrimination at school were related to their academic achievement, educational aspirations, absenteeism, and sense of school belonging.

Educational Aspirations. Students who experience victimization in school may respond by avoiding the harassment, perhaps by dropping out of school, as indicated in their discussion of their educational aspirations and future plans (see section *Educational Aspirations and Future Plans*). In order to examine the relationship between school safety and academic success, we examined how experiences of victimization were related to students' academic achievement and their aspirations regarding post-secondary education. As illustrated in Figure 1.25, LGBT students who reported higher levels of victimization[36] based on their sexual orientation or gender expression were about twice as likely as other students to report that they did not plan to pursue post-secondary education (college, vocational-technical, or trade school).[37] For example, 8.7% of students who experienced a higher severity of victimization based on gender expression did not plan to go to college or to vocational or trade school, compared to 4.2% of those who had experienced less severe victimization. We also found that discriminatory practices were related to lower educational aspirations, though the differences were relatively small and were negligible when we accounted for students' level of victimization.[38]

Academic Achievement. More severe victimization was also related to lower academic achievement among LGBT students. As shown in Figure 1.26,

Figure 1.25 Educational Aspirations and Severity of Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Not Planning to Pursue Post-Secondary Education)

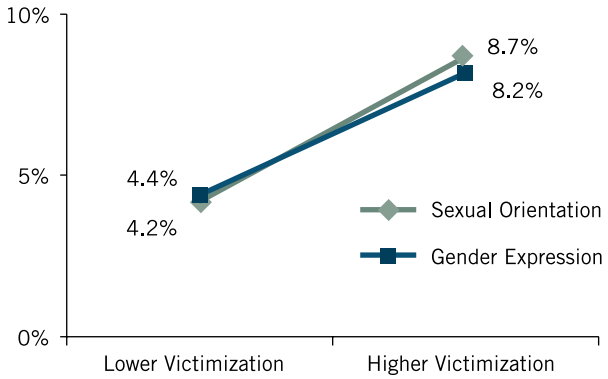
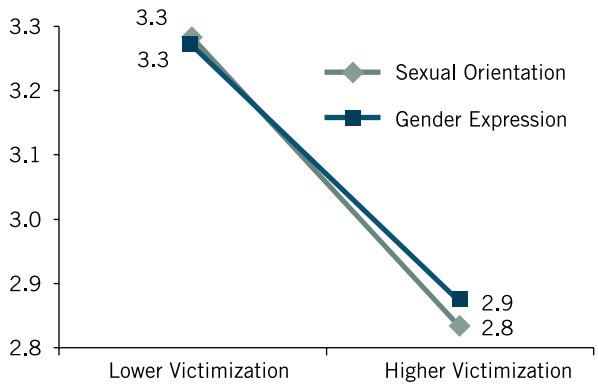


Figure 1.26 Academic Achievement and Severity of Victimization
(LGBT Students' Mean Reported Grade Point Average)

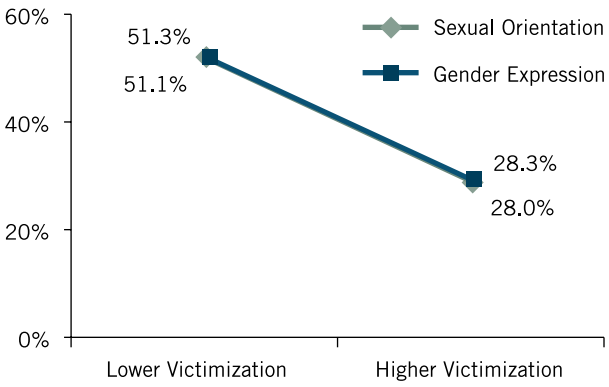


Insight on Psychological Well-Being

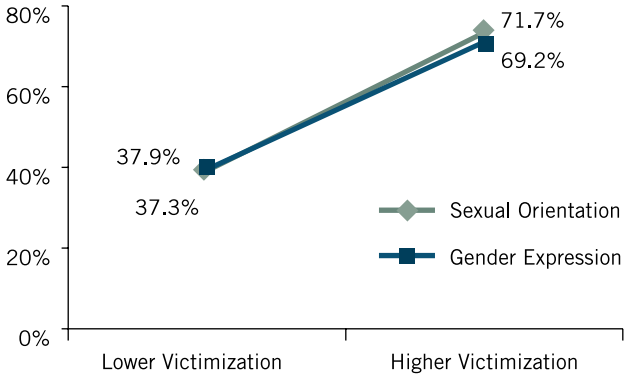
Previous research has shown that being harassed or assaulted at school may have a negative impact on students' mental health and self-esteem.[39] Given that LGBT students are at increased likelihood for experiencing harassment and assault in school, it is especially important to examine how these experiences relate to their well-being. LGBT students who reported more severe victimization regarding their sexual orientation or gender expression had lower levels of self-esteem[40–41] and higher levels of depression than those who reported less severe victimization.[42–43]

Discrimination and stigma have been found to adversely affect the well-being of LGBT people.[44] LGBT students who reported experiencing discriminatory policies or practices in school had lower levels of self-esteem[45] and higher levels of depression[46–47] than students who did not report experiencing this discrimination. Of note, even though discrimination and victimization often co-occur, we found discrimination to be related to these worse outcomes even when accounting for students' level of victimization, indicating an independent negative role of discrimination in student well-being.

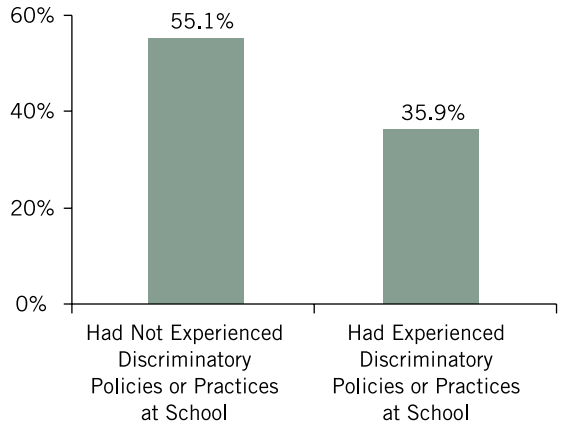
Self-Esteem and Severity of Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Demonstrating Positive Self-Esteem)



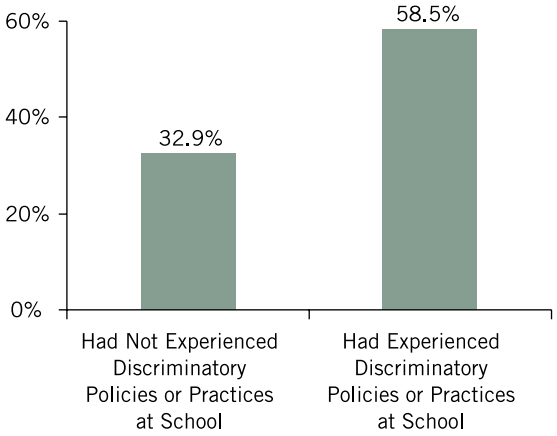
Depression and Severity of Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Demonstrating Higher Levels of Depression)



Self-Esteem and Experiences of Discrimination
(Percentage of LGBT Students Demonstrating Positive Self-Esteem)



Depression and Experiences of Discrimination
(Percentage of LGBT Students Demonstrating Higher Levels of Depression)



These findings demonstrate that hostile school climates can affect not only LGBT students' educational success, but also their psychological well-being. School staff and safe schools advocates who work to ensure that schools are places where LGBT youth can succeed also help to support healthy development and well-being for LGBT youth.

the reported grade point average (GPA) for students who had higher levels of victimization based on their sexual orientation or gender expression was significantly lower than for students who experienced less harassment and assault (3.3 vs. 2.9 for sexual orientation; 3.3 vs. 2.8 for gender expression).[48] Experiences of institutional discrimination were also related to lower educational achievement and this relationship persisted even after accounting for students' direct experiences of victimization.[49] As illustrated in Figure 1.27, LGBT students who said they had personally experienced any discriminatory policies or practices reported lower GPAs than students who did not experience them (3.0 vs. 3.3).

Figure 1.27 Academic Achievement and Experiences of Discrimination
(LGBT Students' Mean Reported Grade Point Average)

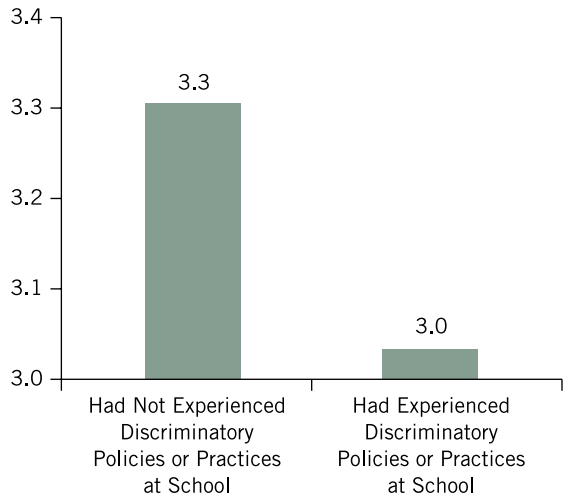
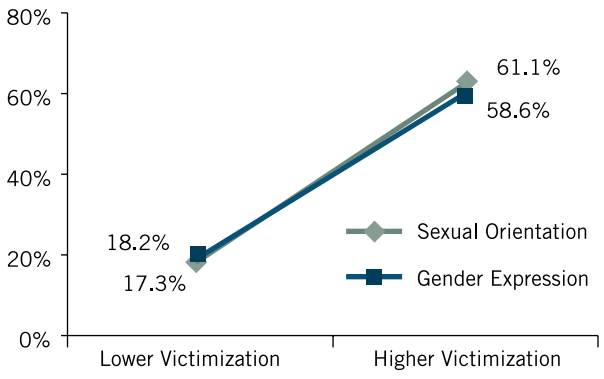


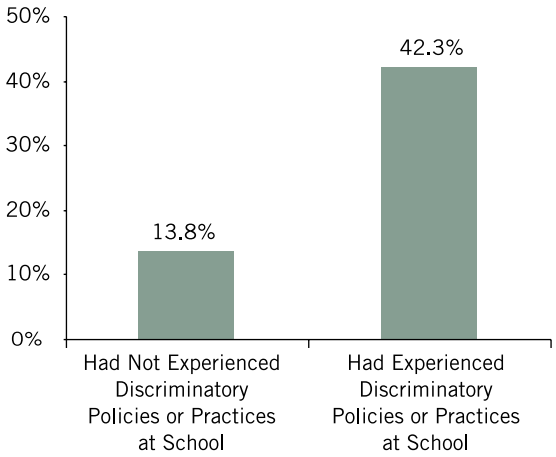
Figure 1.28 Missing School Because of Safety Concerns and Severity of Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Who Had Missed at Least One Day of School in the Past Month)



Absenteeism. School-based victimization may impinge on a student's right to an education. Students who are regularly harassed or assaulted in school may attempt to avoid these hurtful experiences by not attending school and, accordingly, may be more likely to miss school than students who do not experience such victimization. We found that experiences of harassment and assault were, in fact, related to missing days of school.[50] As shown in Figure 1.28 students were more than three times as likely to have missed school in the past month if they had experienced higher levels of victimization related to their sexual orientation (61.1% versus 17.3%) or gender expression (58.6% vs. 18.2%). In addition to victimization, we found that experiences of discrimination were related to missing days of school.[51] As shown in Figure 1.29, LGBT students were more than three times as likely to have missed school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable if they had experienced LGBT-related discrimination in their school (42.3% vs. 13.8%). Thus, discriminatory policies and practices may contribute to a school setting that feels unwelcoming for many students.

Sense of School Belonging. The degree to which students feel accepted by and a part of their school community is another important indicator of school climate and is related to a number of educational outcomes. For example, having a greater sense of belonging to one's school is related to greater academic motivation and effort as well as higher academic achievement.[52] Students who experience victimization or discrimination at school may feel

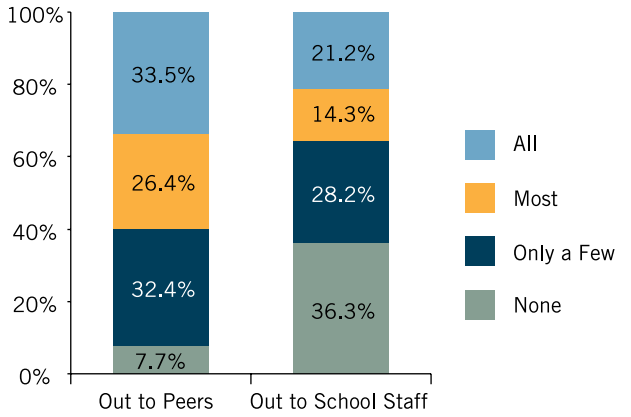
Figure 1.29 Missing School Because of Safety Concerns and Experiences of Discrimination
(Percentage of LGBT Students Who Had Missed at Least One Day of School in the Past Month)



Insight on Being Out in School

Being able to express one's identity is an important aspect of adolescent development. Youth who feel like they can express themselves freely are more likely to feel welcome in their schools. For LGBT adolescents specifically, being open about being LGBT may not only enhance feelings of school belonging, but also contribute to positive well-being.[53] Unfortunately, being open about one's sexual orientation or gender identity may also make LGBT students more explicit targets for victimization, and many LGBT students may feel that they cannot publicly acknowledge or embrace their LGBT identity as a result.

LGBT Students' Outness in School



In our survey, LGBT students were asked about how out or open they are in school about being LGBT. Students were more likely to be out to other students than to school staff. The majority of students (59.9%) were out to most or all of their peers, whereas only 35.5% were out to most or all of the staff in their schools.[54]

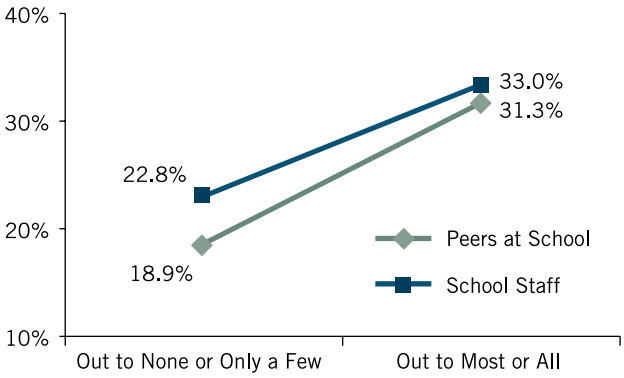
It is important to note that transgender youth can be of any sexual orientation — some may identify as heterosexual and others may identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB). Some transgender youth may be out in their school with regard to sexual orientation but not with regard to their transgender identity. Thus, in the 2013 NSCS, we asked transgender students if they were out about being transgender in addition to the general question about being out as LGBT. Transgender students did not differ from their peers in their general outness about being LGBT.[55] However, more than one fifth (22.8%) said they were not out specifically about being transgender—this included 3.4% who were not out at all, and 19.4% who were out in general (i.e., about their sexual orientation), but not about their transgender identity specifically. Future research should examine the various factors that might account for LGB transgender students being out about their sexual orientation but not their gender identity, such as school climate, individual processes of gender identity development, family support, or general community acceptance. Furthermore, we specifically asked about whether students were out about "being transgender." It is possible that some students who said they were not out responded about not being open about their transgender status but are open about their gender identity (e.g., a student may identify as transgender female, but others believe her to be cisgender female), whereas other students who said they were not out about being transgender were also not open about their gender identity (e.g., a transgender student may identify as female but not be open about it, so that others at school believe her to be a cisgender male). Further research is warranted to explore various ways of being out as a transgender person and how they may affect transgender students' school experiences.

"I really want to come out. Hiding feels terrible, but I'm afraid. I don't know what to do. It would really be helpful if my school could be more supportive of LGBT students. No one at my school is out, so I feel like I'm really alone."

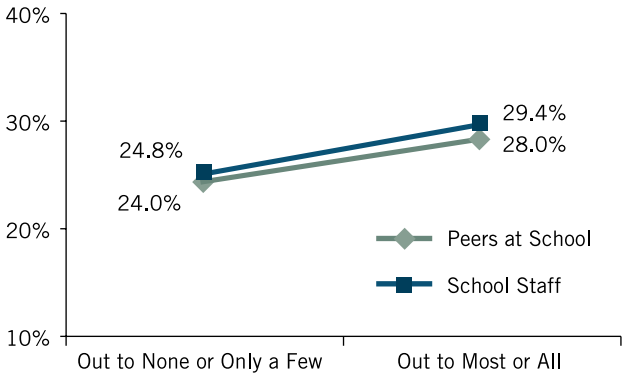
Outness → In-School Victimization

LGBT students who were out to more of their peers and/or school staff experienced higher levels of victimization based on their sexual orientation than students who were out to fewer peers or school staff.[56–57] *LGBT students also experienced higher levels of victimization based on their gender expression when they were more out at school.*[58]

Outness in School and Victimization Based on Sexual Orientation
(Percentage of LGBT Students Experiencing Higher Levels of Victimization)



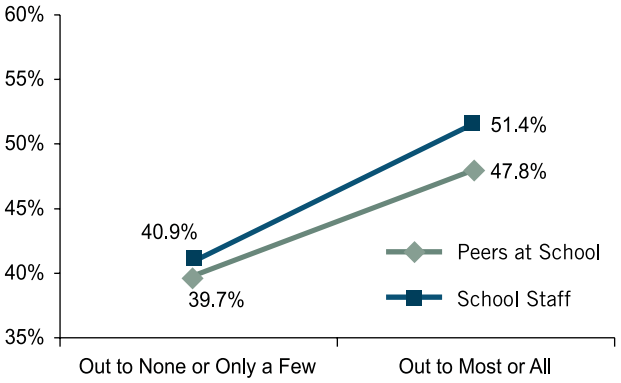
Outness in School and Victimization Based on Gender Expression
(Percentage of Students Experiencing Higher Levels of Victimization)



Outness → Self-Esteem

In spite of experiencing harsher climates in school, being out about one's LGBT identity may be affirming for LGBT youth. For instance, LGBT students who were out to more of their peers and/or school staff reported higher levels of self-esteem than students who were less out at school.[59–60]

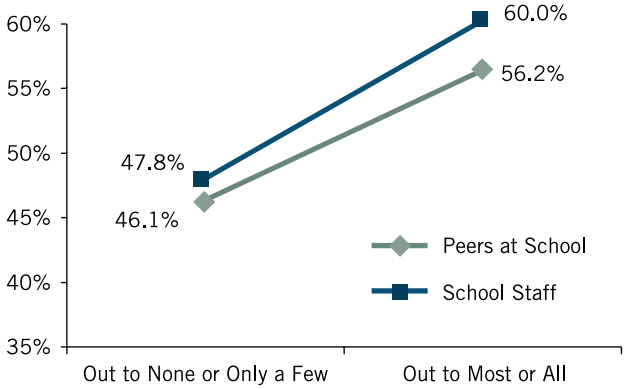
Outness in School and Self-Esteem
(Percentage of LGBT Students Demonstrating Positive Self-Esteem)



Outness → School Belonging

In addition, LGBT students who were out to more peers and/or school staff demonstrated higher levels of school belonging than students who were less out.[61–62]

Outness in School and School Belonging
(Percentage of LGBT Students Demonstrating Positive School Belonging)



Overall, our findings indicate that whereas being more out in school can put some LGBT students at greater risk for victimization, it can also contribute to better well-being. Thus, it is important for schools to provide safe and affirming environments where LGBT students can be open about who they are by responding effectively to bullying and harassment and by adopting LGBT-inclusive policies and practices.

excluded and disconnected from their school community. In order to assess LGBT students' sense of belonging to their school community, survey participants were given a series of statements about feeling like a part of their school and were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements.[63]

As illustrated in Figure 1.30, students who experienced a higher severity of victimization based on sexual orientation or gender expression had lower levels of school belonging than students who experienced less severe victimization in school.[64] For example, nearly two thirds (63.3%) of students who experienced lower levels of victimization based on their sexual orientation reported a positive sense of connection to their school, compared to less than one quarter (23.3%) of students who experienced more severe victimization based on sexual orientation.

Experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school was also related to decreased feelings of connectedness to the school community. As illustrated in Figure 1.31, students who experienced institutional, school-based discrimination were almost twice as likely to report lower levels of belonging compared to students who had not experienced school-based discrimination (69.9% vs. 37.3%).[65]

Overall, these findings illustrate that direct victimization may lead to less welcoming schools and more negative educational outcomes for LGBT students. In addition, the findings show that systemic institutional discrimination is also related to negative educational outcomes, although the effects of discrimination were generally smaller than they were for victimization. In order to ensure that LGBT students are afforded a supportive learning environment and educational opportunities, community and school advocates should work to prevent and respond to in-school victimization and to eliminate school policies and practices that discriminate against LGBT youth.

Figure 1.30 School Belonging and Severity of Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Demonstrating Positive School Belonging)

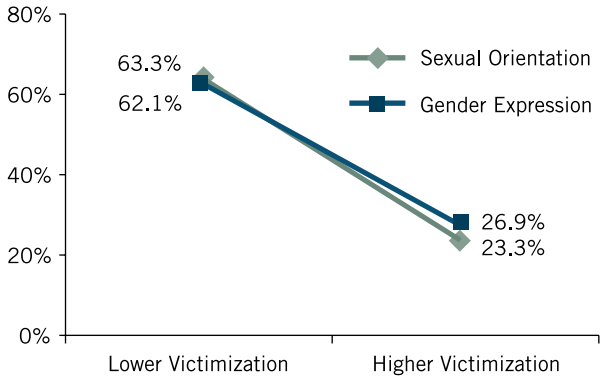
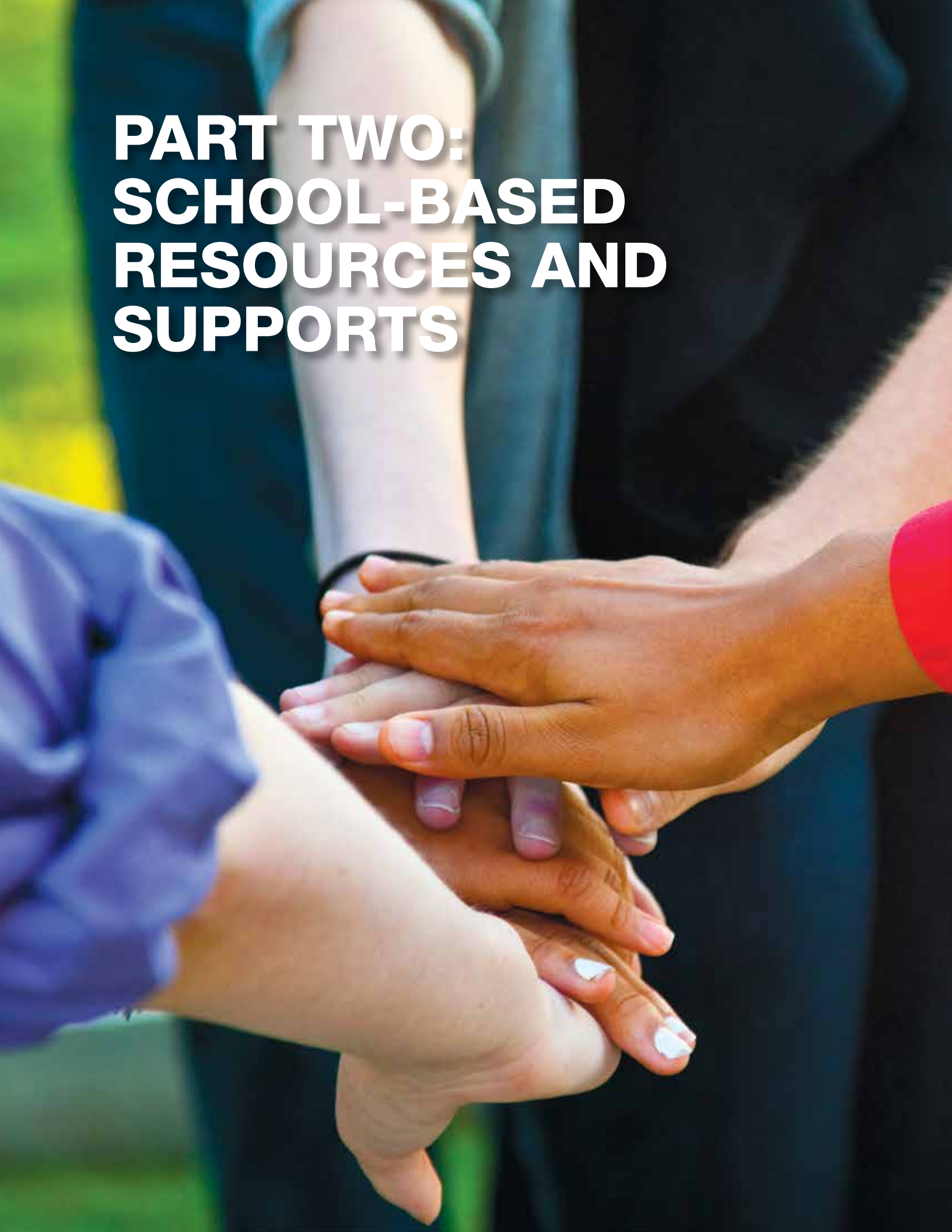


Figure 1.31 School Belonging and Experiences of Discrimination
(Percentage of LGBT Students Demonstrating Positive School Belonging)



PART TWO: SCHOOL-BASED RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Availability of School-Based Resources and Supports

Key Findings

- Only half of LGBT students attended a school that had a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or similar student club that addressed LGBT issues in education.
- Most students did not have access to information about LGBT-related topics in their school library, through the Internet on school computers, or in their textbooks or other assigned readings.
- Less than 1 in 5 students were taught positive representations of LGBT people, history, or events in their classes. Nearly the same amount had been taught negative content about LGBT topics.
- Almost all students could identify at least one school staff member whom they believed was supportive of LGBT students.
- Less than a third of students reported that their school administration was supportive of LGBT students.
- Few students reported that their school had a comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policy that specifically included protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression.

The availability of resources and supports in school for LGBT students is another important dimension of school climate. There are several key resources that may help to promote a safer climate and more positive school experiences for students: student clubs that address issues for LGBT students, school personnel who are supportive of LGBT students, LGBT-inclusive curricular materials, and school policies for addressing incidents of harassment and assault. Thus, we examined the availability of these resources and supports among LGBT students.

Supportive Student Clubs

For all students, including LGBT students, participation in extracurricular activities is related to a number of positive outcomes, such as academic achievement and greater school engagement.[66] Supportive student clubs for LGBT students, often known as Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) or sometimes as Queer Student Alliances or Gay, Transgender, and Straight Alliances, can provide LGBT students in particular with a safe and affirming space within a school environment that they may otherwise experience as hostile. GSAs may also provide leadership opportunities for the students and potential avenues for effective positive school change. In our survey, half (50.3%) of LGBT students said that their school had a GSA or similar student club. Among students with a GSA in their school, over half (56.1%) said that they attended club meetings at least sometimes, and 29.9% had participated as a leader or an officer in their club (see also Table 2.1). Although most LGBT students reported participating in their GSA at some level, almost a third had not.

"I wish we had a GSA. It seems most of the people in my school just don't want to talk about those issues. They just want to ignore them, even though the issues are present."

There is a small body of research examining why LGBT students may or may not participate in their school's GSA. Some research suggests that experiences of harassment and discrimination may motivate students to attend,[67] and other literature suggests that some groups of students may be discouraged from attending because they do not perceive their schools' GSAs to be inclusive and/or confidential environments,[68] but more research is needed in this area. Nevertheless, GSA leaders and advisors should assess potential barriers to GSA attendance at their school and take steps to ensure that GSA meetings are accessible to a diverse range of LGBT students.

Inclusive Curricular Resources

LGBT student experiences may also be shaped by inclusion of LGBT-related information in the curriculum. Learning about LGBT historical events and positive role models may enhance their engagement with the school community and provide valuable information about the LGBT community. Students in our survey were asked whether they had been exposed to representations of LGBT people, history, or events in lessons at school, and the majority (68.4%) of respondents said that their classes did not include these topics (see Figure 2.1). About a third (31.6%) of students said that LGBT topics had been discussed in one or more of their classes. Of those students, about half said that LGBT topics were covered in a

Table 2.1 Availability of and Participation in Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs)

Have a GSA at School	
Yes	50.3%
No	49.7%
Frequency of GSA Meeting Attendance (n = 3936)	
Never	32.3%
Rarely	11.6%
Sometimes	10.5%
Often	7.1%
Frequently	38.5%
Acted as a Leader or Officer (n = 3914)	
No	70.1%
Yes	29.9%

positive way (18.5% of the full sample), and about half said that it was negative (14.8% of the full sample). Among the students who had been taught positive things about LGBT-related topics in class, History/Social Studies, English and Health were the classes most often mentioned as being inclusive of these topics (see Table 2.2).

We also asked students about their ability to access information about LGBT issues that teachers may not be covering in class, such as additional reading materials featuring information about LGBT issues. These types of LGBT-related curricular resources were not available for most LGBT students in our survey. As Figure 2.2 illustrates, less than half

Figure 2.1 Percentage of LGBT Students Taught LGBT-Related Topics in Any Classroom Curriculum

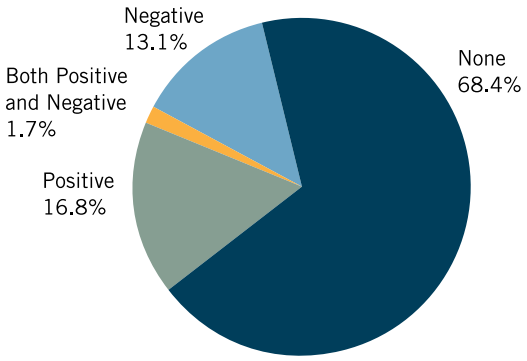
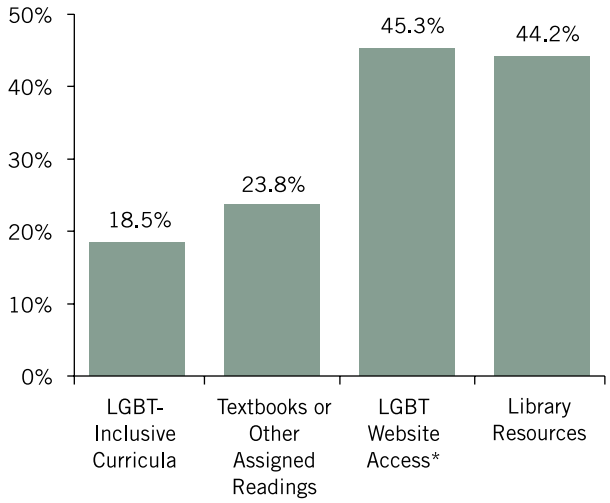


Figure 2.2 LGBT Students' Reports on the Availability of LGBT-Related Curricular Resources



*Among LGBT students able to access the Internet on school computers

Table 2.2. Classes in Which Positive Representations of LGBT-Related Topics are Taught*

Classes	% among Students who were Taught LGBT-Related Topics (n = 1444)	% of All LGBT Students in Survey (n = 7898)
History or Social Studies	56.7%	10.4%
English	46.1%	8.4%
Health	24.9%	4.6%
Science	15.7%	2.9%
Psychology	13.9%	2.5%
Art	12.8%	2.3%
Foreign Language	11.5%	2.1%
Music	10.6%	1.9%
Gym or Physical Education	5.5%	1.0%
Sociology	6.9%	1.3%
Math	4.2%	0.8%
Other Class (e.g., Drama, Philosophy)	13.2%	2.4%

*Because respondents could select multiple responses, categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages do not add up to 100%.

Insight on LGBT Students and Extracurricular Activities

One element of students' school experience is their participation in and level of involvement with extracurricular activities, such as athletics, arts, and student government. For students in general, prior research has shown that participation in these types of school activities is positively linked to academic achievement and psychological well-being.[69] Yet students who experience frequent harassment at school may choose not to spend additional time in that environment and may be less likely to be involved in optional school activities like extracurricular clubs, and in fact, many students in our survey reported specifically avoiding extracurricular activities because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (see the *School Safety* section for these reports). These students may not gain the same benefits from extracurricular participation as students who experience less frequent harassment.

In order to understand LGBT students' level of extracurricular participation, we asked students about their involvement in a variety of school activities. The table below shows the total percentage of LGBT students who reported participating in various school activities and the percentage of students who also reported acting as leaders or officers for each activity. Students reported the highest levels of involvement in subject-matter clubs (40.5%) and arts-related activities, with about half participating in band, orchestra, chorus, or choir (47.9%) and about a third participating in a school play or musical (34.9%). Future research should examine how these rates compare to the general population of students, and the potential impact that hostile school climate may have on LGBT students' rates of participation and leadership in extracurricular activities.

Extracurricular Activity	Participation Rate	Service as a Leader/ Officer
Band, orchestra, chorus, or choir	47.9%	14.3%
Academic clubs (e.g., Art, Computer, Foreign Language, Debate)	40.5%	9.2%
School play or musical	34.9%	11.0%
Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)	34.0%	15.0%
Interscholastic sports (competition with teams from other schools)	23.4%	5.1%
Hobby clubs (e.g., photography, chess)	22.7%	4.9%
National Honor Society (NHS) or other academic honor society	19.8%	3.5%
School newspaper, magazine, yearbook, or annual	18.2%	5.2%
Service organizations (e.g., Key Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters)	15.5%	3.8%
Intramural sports (competition with teams in one's school)	12.4%	2.0%
Student government	12.2%	5.3%
Vocational education clubs (e.g., DECA, SkillsUSA, VICA, FFA, FHA)	8.8%	2.5%
Clubs addressing issues of human rights, tolerance, and diversity (besides a GSA), such as Amnesty International or a diversity club	8.7%	2.5%
Ethnic or cultural clubs (e.g., ASPIRA, Asian Cultural Society, African American Student Union)	5.2%	1.0%
Cheerleaders, Pep Club, or Majorettes	6.4%	1.6%
Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)	4.9%	2.2%
Religious clubs	4.2%	0.9%

*Because respondents could select multiple responses, categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages do not add up to 100%.

(44.2%) reported that they could find books or information on LGBT-related topics, such as LGBT history, in their school library. In addition, less than half (45.3%) of students with Internet access at school reported being able to access LGBT-related information via school computers. Furthermore, less than a quarter (23.8%) reported that LGBT-related topics were included in textbooks or other assigned class readings.

Supportive School Personnel

Supportive teachers, principals, and other school staff serve as another important resource for LGBT students. Being able to speak with a caring adult in school may have a significant positive impact on the school experiences for students, particularly those who feel marginalized or experience harassment. In our survey, almost all students (96.1%) could identify at least one school staff member whom they believed was supportive of LGBT students at their school, and 61.0% could identify six or more supportive school staff (see Figure 2.3).

As the leaders of the school, school administrators may play a particularly important role in the school experiences of LGBT youth. They may serve not only as caring adults to whom the youth can turn, but they also set the tone of the school and determine specific policies and programs that may affect the school's climate. As shown in Figure 2.4, nearly one in three students (29.9%) reported that their school administration (e.g. principal, vice principal) was very or somewhat supportive of LGBT students, yet more than one third of students (34.8%) said their administration was very or somewhat unsupportive.

To understand whether certain types of educators were more likely to be seen as supportive, we asked LGBT students how comfortable they would feel talking one-on-one with various school personnel about LGBT-related issues. As shown in Figure 2.5, students reported that they would feel most comfortable talking with teachers and school-based mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, social workers, or psychologists): 58.4% said they would be somewhat or very comfortable talking with a teacher and 53.1% would be somewhat or very comfortable talking about LGBT issues with a mental health staff member (see Figure 2.5). Fewer students in our survey said they would feel comfortable talking one-on-one with a school nurse, school librarian, principal or vice principal, athletic coach/Physical Education (P.E.) teacher, or school safety officer about these issues (see also Figure 2.5).[70]

In addition to comfort level, students were asked how frequently in the past school year they had engaged in positive or helpful conversations with school personnel about LGBT-related issues. Nearly two thirds (63.4%) of LGBT students spoke with a teacher about LGBT issues at least once in the past year (see Figure 2.6), yet only a minority of students reported ever having had conversations about LGBT-related issues with other types of school staff.[71] Given that students reported higher levels of comfort talking to teachers about LGBT

Figure 2.3 LGBT Students' Reports on the Number of Teachers and Other School Staff Who are Supportive of LGBT Students

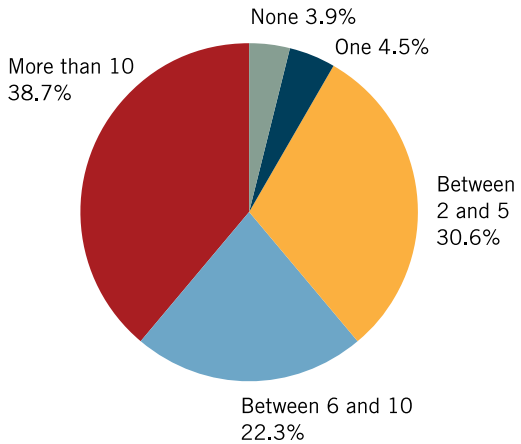
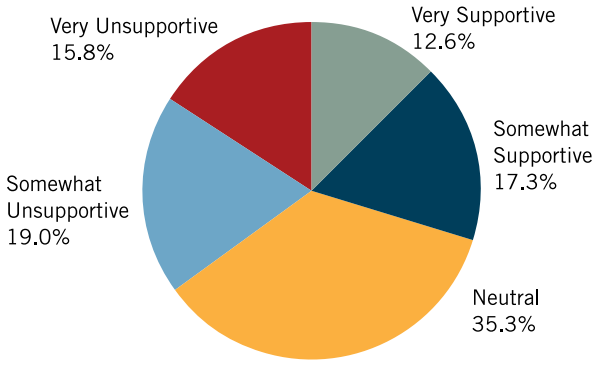


Figure 2.4 LGBT Students' Reports on How Supportive Their School Administration Is of LGBT Students



issues compared to other school staff, it is not surprising that they were more likely to speak with teachers about these issues. Furthermore, because students spend more time with teachers than other types of school staff, they may have more opportunity for discussion on any topic. It may be that students have less daily interaction with school staff other than teachers, and thus fewer opportunities for positive conversations about LGBT issues than they have with their teachers. However, it may also be that LGBT students perceive that these other staff members are less willing to support LGBT students, especially given that they report low levels of comfort with these staff members, with the exception of school mental health professionals.

Figure 2.5 Comfort Talking with School Personnel about LGBT Issues
(Percentage of LGBT Students Reporting That They Would Be Somewhat or Very Comfortable)

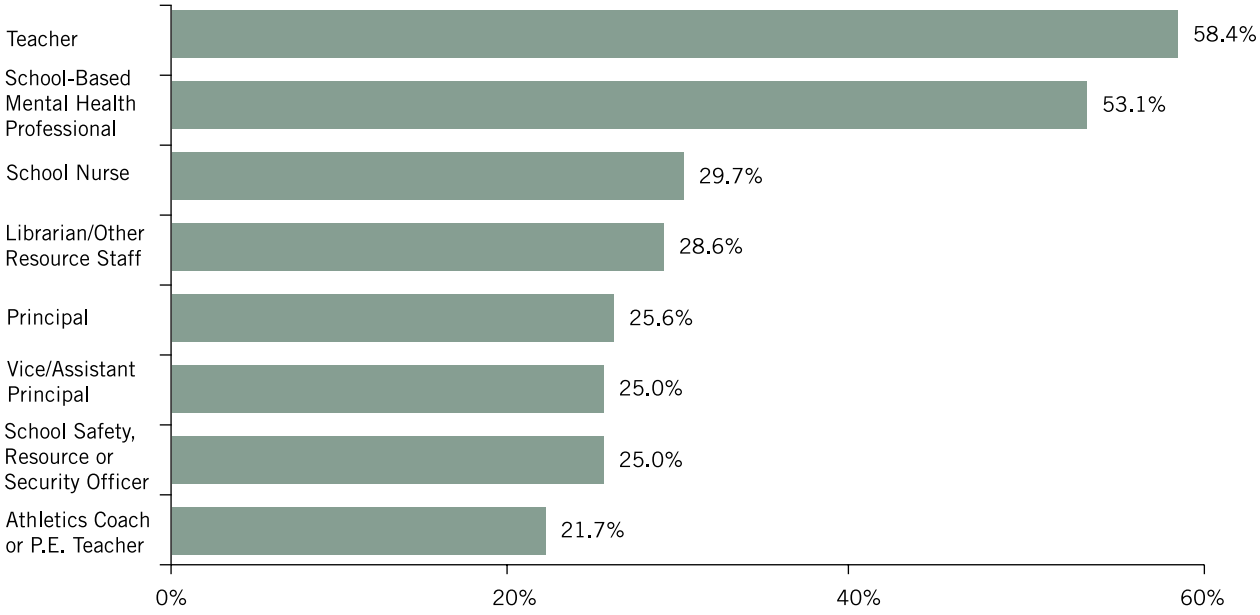
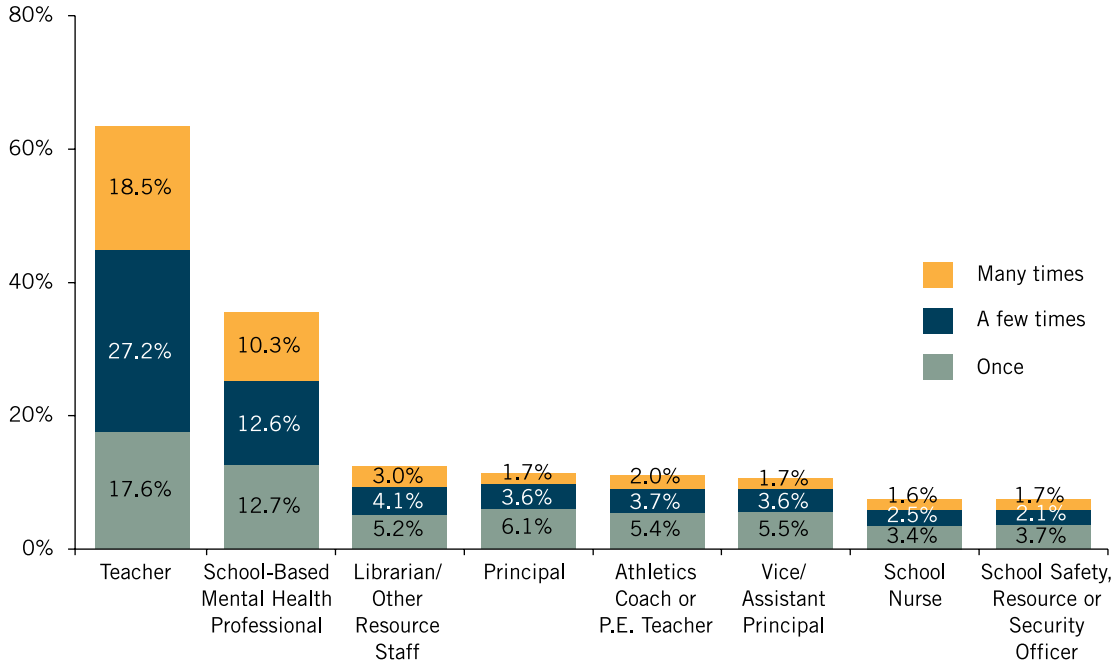


Figure 2.6 Frequency that LGBT Students Talked to School Staff about LGBT Issues in the Past School Year



The presence of LGBT school personnel who are out or open at school about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity may provide another source of support for LGBT students. In addition, the number of out LGBT personnel may provide a visible sign of a more supportive and accepting school climate. Over a third (42.5%) of students said they could identify an out LGBT staff person at their school (see Figure 2.7).

School Policies for Addressing Bullying, Harassment, and Assault

School policies that address in-school bullying, harassment, and assault are powerful tools for creating school environments where students feel safe. These types of policies can explicitly state protections based on personal characteristics, such as sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, among others. In this report, we refer to a "comprehensive" policy as one that explicitly enumerates protections based on personal characteristics and includes both sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. When a school has and enforces a comprehensive policy, especially one which also includes procedures for reporting incidents to school authorities, it can send a message that bullying, harassment, and assault are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Comprehensive school policies may also provide students with greater protection against victimization because they make clear the various forms of bullying, harassment, and assault that will not be tolerated. It may also demonstrate that student safety, including the safety of LGBT students, is taken seriously by school administrators. "Partially enumerated" policies explicitly mention sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, but not both, and may not provide the same level of protection for LGBT students. "Generic" anti-bullying or anti-harassment school policies do not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity/expression as protected categories.

Students were asked whether their school had a policy about in-school bullying, harassment, or assault, and if that policy explicitly included sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Although a majority of students (82.1%) reported that their school had some type of policy (see Table 2.3), only a tenth (10.1%) of students in our survey reported that their school had a comprehensive policy that specifically mentioned both sexual orientation and gender identity/expression (see also Table 2.3).

Figure 2.7 LGBT Students' Reports on the Number of Openly LGBT Teachers or Other School Staff

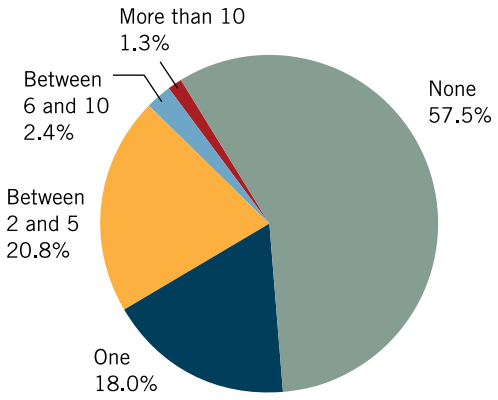


Table 2.3. LGBT Students' Reports of School Bullying, Harassment and Assault Policies

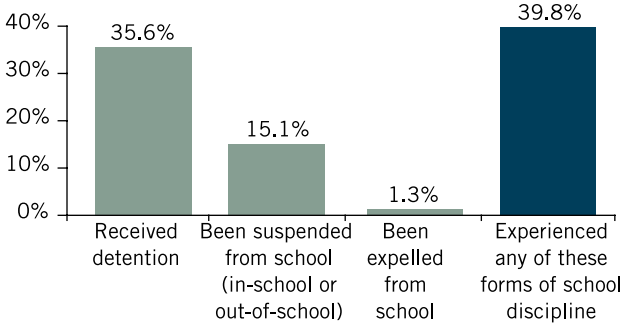
No Policy/Don't Know	17.9%
Any Policy	82.1%
Generic (enumerates neither sexual orientation nor gender expression)/ Unsure if policy includes enumeration	57.4%
Partially Enumerated	14.7%
Sexual orientation only	*13.9%*
Gender identity/expression only	*0.8%*
Comprehensive (enumerates both sexual orientation and gender identity/expression)	10.1%

Insight on School Discipline and the School-to-Prison Pipeline

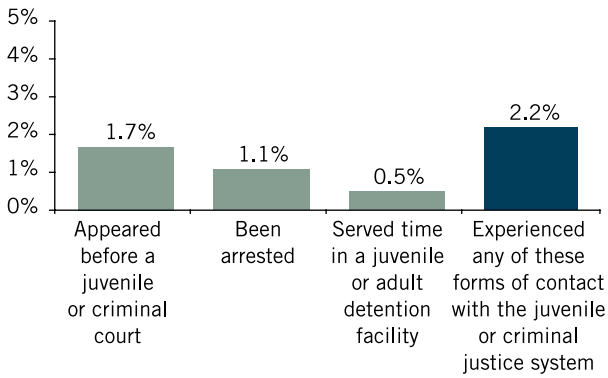
In recent years, there has been growing attention to the role that schools might play in high rates of juvenile incarceration in the US.[72] Zero-tolerance, three-strikes, and other mandatory-sentencing policies have contributed to elevated school expulsion rates and contact with the juvenile and criminal justice systems despite decreasing youth crime rates.[73] Thus, school policies and practices may push students out of school or otherwise encourage them to drop out by making schools feel less welcoming. Collectively, these policies and practices have become known as the school-to-prison pipeline (STPP), and they appear to have disproportionate effects on students of color and students with disabilities.[74] There is less information about the role of these policies and practices among LGBT youth, although some literature has found that LGB[75] and gender nonconforming[76] youth may be disproportionately affected by the STTP.

We asked respondents in the 2013 NSCS about their disciplinary experiences at school (i.e., whether they had ever received detention, been suspended, or been expelled from school) and their involvement with the juvenile or criminal justice system as a result of school discipline (i.e., whether they had ever appeared before a court, been arrested, or served time in a detention facility). Two in five (39.8%) respondents in this survey said they had ever been disciplined at school, including 35.6% who had received detention, 15.1% who had been suspended, and 1.3% who had been expelled (see figure below). These school-based disciplinary experiences may increase the likelihood of involvement with the juvenile or criminal justice system: 2.2% of LGBT youth said they had had contact with the juvenile or criminal justice system as a result of disciplinary action at school, including 1.1% who had been arrested, 1.7% who had appeared before a juvenile or criminal court, and 0.5% who had served time in a juvenile or adult detention facility (see figure below).

Percentage of LGBT Students who Have Experienced School Discipline



Percentage of LGBT Students who Have Been Involved in the Juvenile/Criminal Justice System Due to School Discipline



Several school-related factors may push students out of school and increase their likelihood of involvement in the justice system—whether through decreased engagement at school, or through formal referral to law enforcement or the justice system. Many LGBT youth experience victimization, and the way in which teachers and school administrators respond to that bullying and harassment may function to push some students out of school. As discussed in *Reporting of School-Based Harassment and Assault*, 9.8% of the youth who reported harassment/assault to school staff said that they were disciplined themselves as a result. Thus, reporting experiences of harassment to school officials may in and of itself pose a risk of disciplinary action for some LGBT students.

LGBT students must also often navigate unfair school policies and practices. Nearly a tenth of the students in our survey (9.2%) reported that simply being out in school resulted in school discipline. For example, one 8th grade cisgender female student from Lousiana said, "We aren't allowed to tell teachers if we are LGBT. It's like the whole 'don't ask don't tell' thing." Similarly, one 12th grade cisgender male student from Indiana said that, "If [students] come out, they are disciplined and suspended/expelled unless they 'renounce' being LGBT." LGBT students also often reported that rules were not unilaterally enforced and that they were often

disciplined for behaviors for which their non-LGBT peers were not. For instance, as reported in *Experiences of Discrimination at School*, 28.2% of LGBT students said they had been disciplined for public affection that is not disciplined when it occurs between non-LGBT peers.

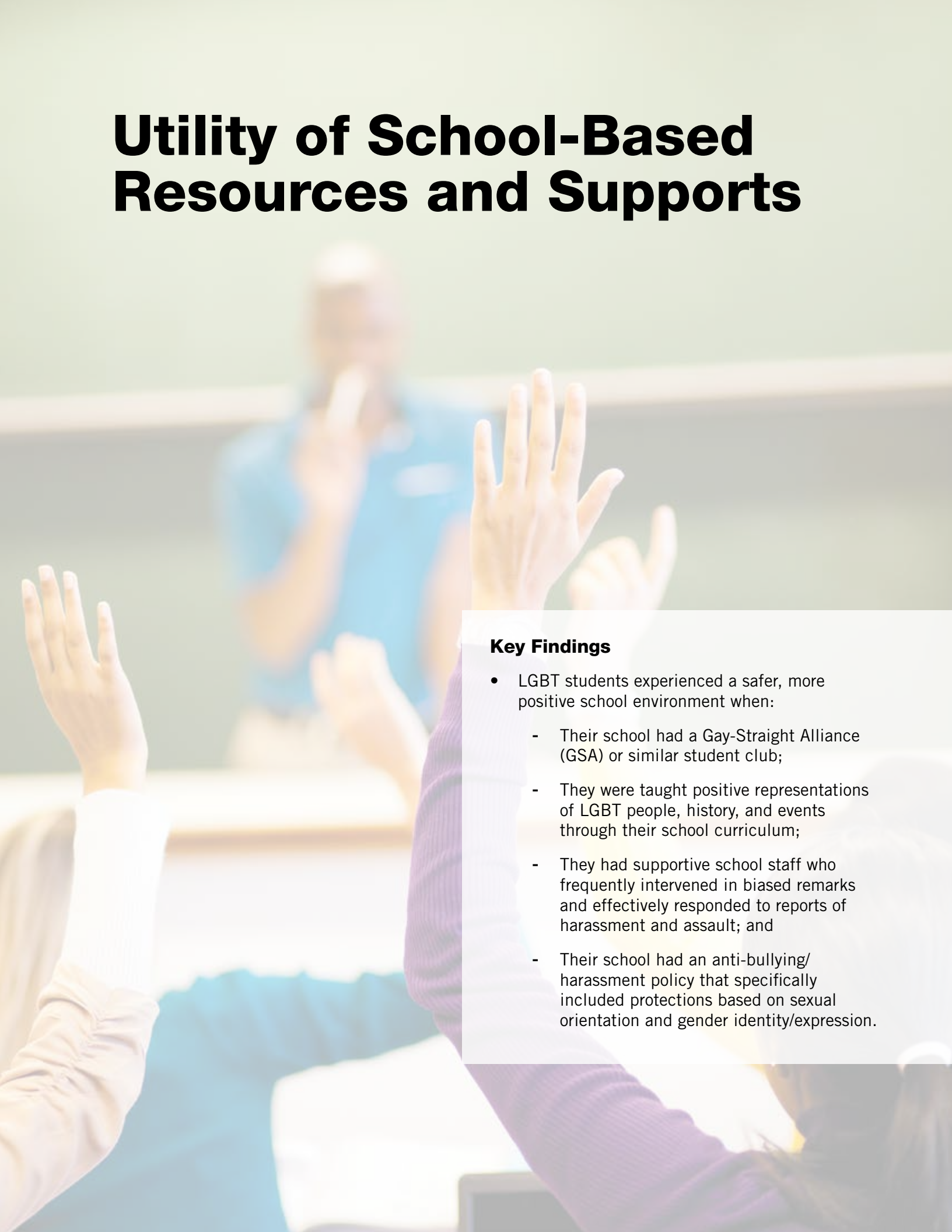
Schools that employ unfair practices toward LGBT youth may also be more likely to involve the justice system when disciplining students. Among the LGBT youth in our survey, those who had experienced discriminatory policies and practices at school were three times as likely as their peers to have been involved with the criminal or juvenile justice system as a result of school-related infractions (3.1% vs. 1.1%),[77] and they were also more likely to have received detention or been suspended or expelled.[78]

Research among the general youth population has shown that Black/African American youth encounter disproportionate school discipline and are overrepresented in the justice system, and some evidence also suggests that Hispanic/Latino youth may be overrepresented as well.[79] Thus, it may be that LGBT youth of color are at disproportionate risk for school discipline and school disciplinary approaches involving the justice system. Among our sample of LGBT youth, we found that Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and multiracial students were substantially more likely to have been disciplined at school than White/European American and Asian/Pacific Islander LGBT students.[80] However, we did not find different levels of contact with the juvenile or criminal justice system as a result of school discipline by race/ethnicity.

LGBT youth may also be more likely to experience school discipline as a result of their gender expression or gender identity. Some prior research of adolescents has shown that students whose gender expression does not conform to traditional expectations for their gender may experience disproportionate discipline.[81] Although less research has focused on discipline among youth with regard to gender identity, specifically transgender identity, evidence among adults suggests that transgender people are substantially more likely to have contact with the justice system than the general population.[82] In our survey, we found that transgender youth were more likely to have been disciplined at school than cisgender youth.[83] There were fewer differences by gender identity when examining the different types of contact with the justice system, although transgender students did have somewhat higher rates of overall contact than some of their peers. Among the cisgender youth in the survey, we found that those whose gender expression was nonconforming reported higher rates of school discipline than their gender conforming peers.[84]

These findings provide insight as to how LGBT youth may be pushed out of school and funneled into the justice system. LGBT youth may be disciplined for being open about their identity or targeted for breaking rules that are not enforced with their non-LGBT peers. LGBT youth who are gender nonconforming, for example, may be more likely to face school discipline due to school rules that prohibit some types of nonconforming gender expression, such as gendered dress codes (see section *Experiences of Discrimination at School*). Furthermore, given the hostile climate faced by LGBT youth in general, and transgender and gender nonconforming students especially (see section *Demographic Comparisons in Safety and Victimization*), these students may also be at higher risk of being pushed out or dropping out of school. It is important to note that findings from our survey are likely not a comprehensive estimate of LGBT youth contact with the justice system, as youth were asked about contact with the justice system only if it had resulted from disciplinary action at school. In addition, our survey only includes youth who had attended school in the 2012–2013 school year; LGBT students who had left school or been expelled in a prior year because of disciplinary infractions and/or justice involvement would not have been included. Thus, the actual rate of LGBT students' experiences of school discipline and involvement with the juvenile/criminal justice system may be even higher than assessed in the survey. School staff should incorporate non-punitive disciplinary practices when possible, including restorative justice approaches, rather than practices that result in exclusion from the classroom. Furthermore, educators should evaluate their school policies for equity and non-discrimination, and they should ensure that they are applied equitably to all students. Administrators, teachers, and other staff members may need to work together to ensure that policies are universally understood and fairly applied.

Utility of School-Based Resources and Supports



Key Findings

- LGBT students experienced a safer, more positive school environment when:
  - Their school had a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or similar student club;
  - They were taught positive representations of LGBT people, history, and events through their school curriculum;
  - They had supportive school staff who frequently intervened in biased remarks and effectively responded to reports of harassment and assault; and
  - Their school had an anti-bullying/ harassment policy that specifically included protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

School-based resources, such as supportive student clubs (e.g., Gay-Straight Alliances, or GSAs), LGBT-inclusive curricula, supportive school personnel, and enumerated policies for reporting bullying, harassment, and assault, may help create a more positive school environment for LGBT students. These institutional supports may provide formal processes and structures for addressing LGBT-related issues in schools, which then may foster better school outcomes for students. In this section, we examine the relationship between school-based institutional supports and school climate, as well as educational indicators such as absenteeism, academic achievement, and educational aspirations.

Supportive Student Clubs

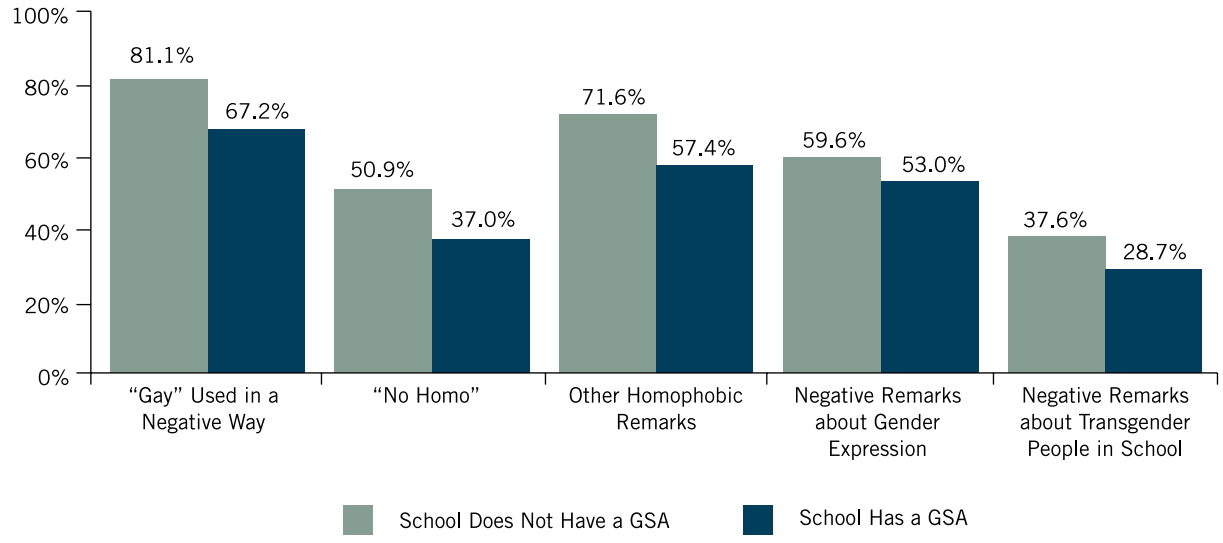
Student clubs that address issues of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression (such as Gay-Straight Alliances, or GSAs) can provide a safe space for LGBT students to meet, socialize, and advocate for changes in their schools and communities. The presence of a GSA may also provide visible evidence of LGBT peers and their allies and contribute to a more respectful student body. As such, GSAs can contribute to safer and more inclusive schools for LGBT students.

School Safety and Absenteeism. LGBT students who attended schools with a GSA:

- Heard anti-LGBT remarks less frequently than LGBT students in schools without a GSA. For instance, 57.4% of students in schools with a GSA reported hearing homophobic remarks such as "fag" or "dyke" often or frequently, compared to 71.6% of students in schools without a GSA (see Figure 2.8);[85]
- Were less likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation (46.0% vs. 64.4% of students without a GSA) or gender expression (32.9% vs. 44.2%; Figure 2.9);[86] and
- Experienced less severe victimization related to their sexual orientation or gender expression. For example, less than 2 in 10 students (19.0%) in schools with a GSA experienced higher levels of victimization based on sexual orientation, compared to more than one third of students (36.2%) in schools without GSAs (see Figure 2.10).[87]

Perhaps in part because of the positive effect of GSAs on school climate, LGBT students in schools with a GSA were less likely to have missed school

Figure 2.8 Presence of Gay-Straight Alliances and Frequency of Hearing Anti-LGBT Remarks
(Percentage of LGBT Students Hearing Remarks Often or Frequently)



in the past month because of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable (23.2% compared to 36.7% without a GSA; see also Figure 2.9).[88]

Students' Connections to School Staff. Given that GSAs typically include at least one faculty advisor, the presence of a GSA may make it easier for LGBT students to identify a supportive school staff person. Indeed, students in schools with a GSA were more likely to say their schools had supportive staff members than students in schools without a GSA (99.5% vs. 92.6%), as seen in Figure 2.11.[89]

By increasing awareness of anti-LGBT bias in the school environment or promoting training for educators on LGBT issues, GSAs may help increase rates of staff intervention in anti-LGBT biased remarks: staff in schools with GSAs intervened in homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression more frequently than educators in schools without a GSA. For example, 20.8% of staff in schools with GSAs intervened in homophobic remarks most of the time or always, compared to 12.7% of staff in schools without GSAs (see Figure 2.12).[90]

Figure 2.9 Presence of Gay-Straight Alliances and Feelings of Safety and Missing School

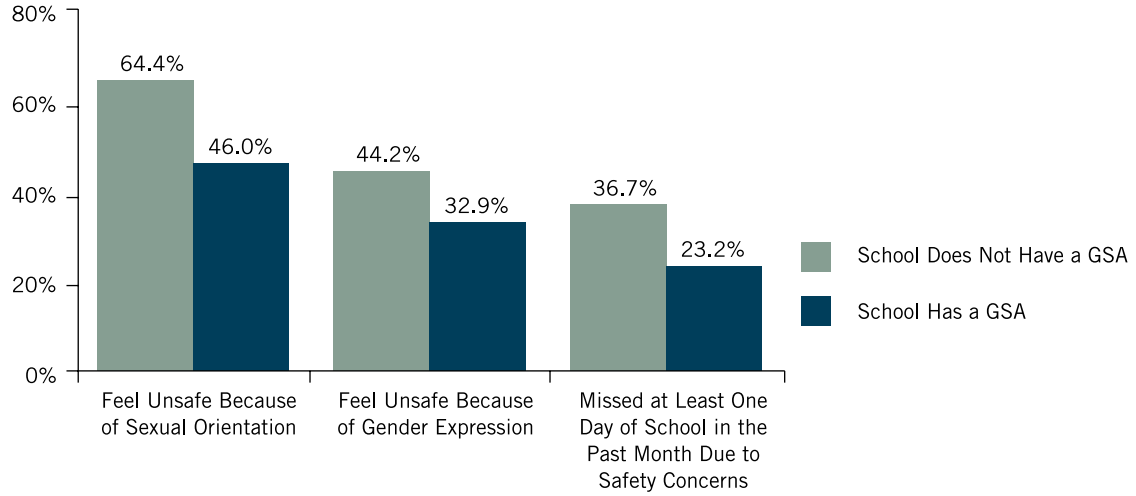


Figure 2.10 Presence of Gay-Straight Alliances and Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Experiencing Higher Levels of Victimization)

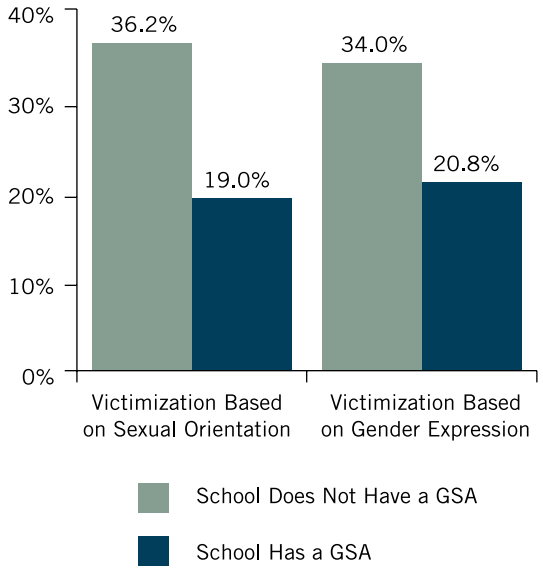
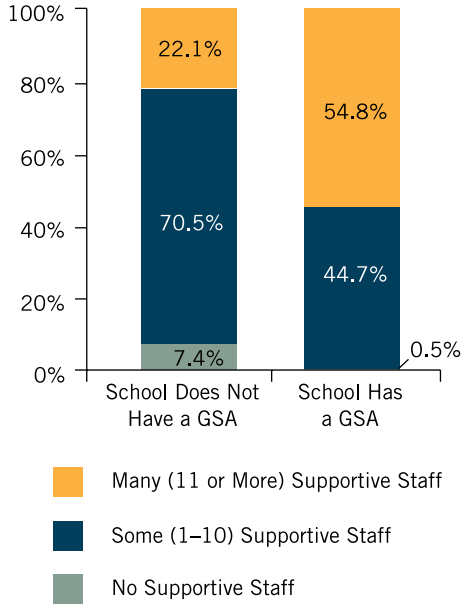


Figure 2.11 Presence of Gay-Straight Alliances and Number of Supportive School Staff



Students' Connections to Peers and Peer Acceptance. GSAs provide an opportunity for LGBT students and their allies to meet together in the school environment, and they may also provide an opportunity for LGBT students and issues to be visible to other students in school. In addition, GSAs may engage in activities designed to combat anti-LGBT prejudice and raise awareness about LGBT issues, such as the Day of Silence. As such, they may foster greater acceptance of LGBT people among the student body, which then may foster a more positive school climate for LGBT students. Students who attended schools with a GSA were much more likely to report that their classmates were accepting of LGBT people. Overall, 45.8% of students said their schools were somewhat or very accepting of LGBT people. However, as shown in Figure 2.13, students in schools with GSAs were almost twice as likely to describe their schools as accepting compared to students in schools without a GSA (59.5% vs. 32.6%).[91] Given that GSAs are related to more supportive educators and more accepting peers, it is not surprising that LGBT students with a GSA reported higher levels of school belonging.[92]

Inclusive Curriculum

Many experts in multicultural education believe that a curriculum that is inclusive of diverse groups — including culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation — instills a belief in the intrinsic worth of all individuals and in the value of a diverse society.[93] Including LGBT-related issues in the curriculum in a positive manner may make LGBT students feel like more valued members of the school community, and it may also promote more positive feelings about LGBT issues and persons among their peers, thereby resulting in a more positive school climate.[94]

School Safety and Absenteeism. Among the LGBT students in our survey, attending a school that included positive representations of LGBT topics in the curriculum was related to a less hostile school climate. LGBT students in schools with an inclusive curriculum:

- Heard homophobic remarks less frequently. For instance, 54.7% of students in schools with an inclusive curriculum reported hearing "gay" used in a negative way often or frequently, compared to 78.5% of students in schools without an inclusive curriculum (see Figure 2.14);[95]

Figure 2.12 Presence of Gay-Straight Alliances and Staff Intervention in Anti-LGBT Remarks
(Percentage of LGBT Students Reporting That Staff Intervene Most of the Time or Always)

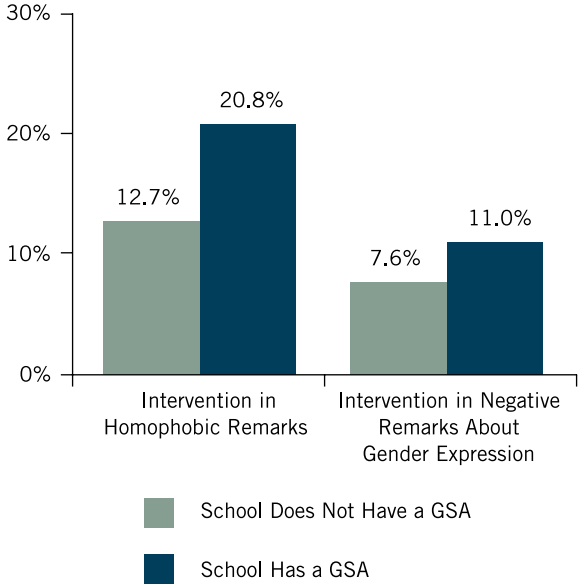
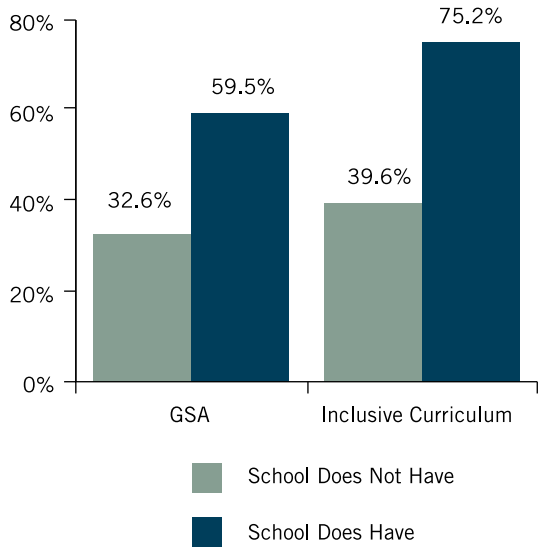


Figure 2.13 School Supports and Peer Acceptance of LGBT People
(Percentage of LGBT Students Reporting That Their Peers Are Somewhat or Very Accepting)



- Heard negative remarks about gender expression and transgender people less frequently. Four in ten students (43.5%) in schools with an inclusive curriculum heard negative remarks about gender expression often or frequently, compared to six in ten (59.2%) of those in schools without an inclusive curriculum (see also Figure 2.14);[96]

- Felt safer. One third of students (34.8%) in schools with an inclusive curriculum had felt unsafe in the past month due to their sexual orientation, compared to more than half (59.8%) of those in schools without an inclusive curriculum (see Figure 2.15); and

- Reported less severe victimization. As shown in Figure 2.16, students in schools with an inclusive curriculum were half as likely to have experienced higher levels of victimization, compared to students in schools without an inclusive curriculum (12.6% vs. 31.0% for victimization based on sexual orientation; 14.1% vs. 30.5% for victimization based on gender expression).[97]

As we saw with having a GSA, an inclusive curriculum may increase feelings of safety and result in less absenteeism. Students in schools with an inclusive curriculum were half as likely to report having missed school due to feeling unsafe

Figure 2.14 Inclusive Curriculum and Frequency of Hearing Anti-LGBT Remarks
(Percentage of LGBT Students Hearing Remarks Often or Frequently)

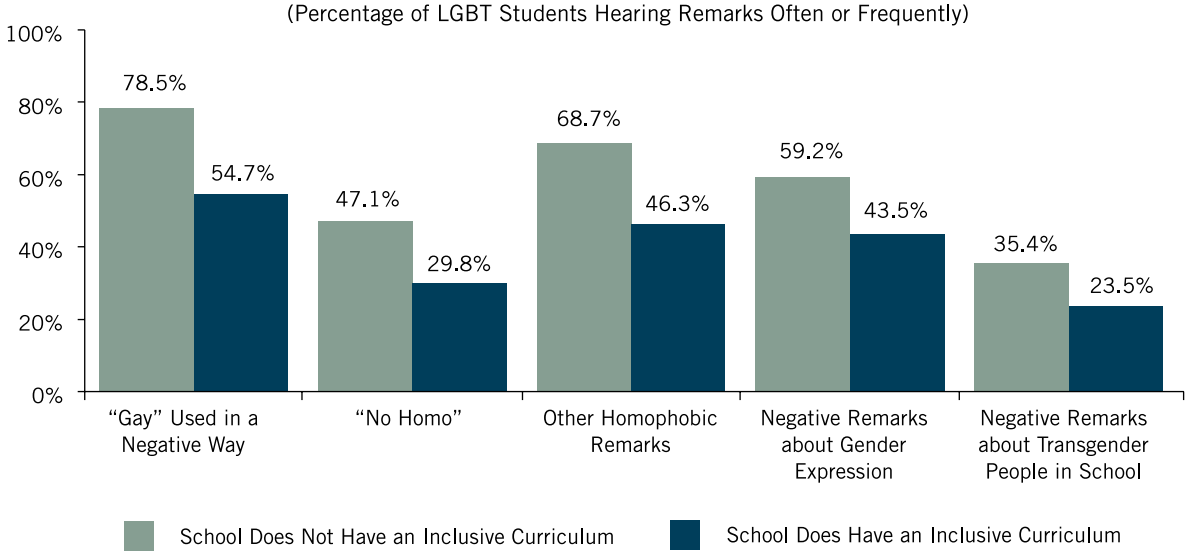
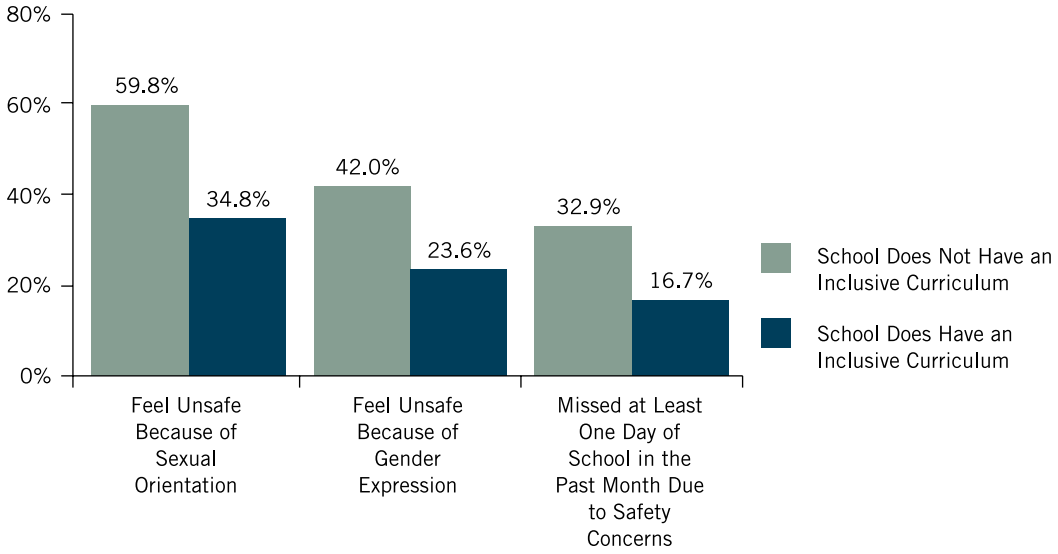


Figure 2.15 Inclusive Curriculum and Feelings of Safety and Missing School



or uncomfortable (16.7% vs. 32.9%), perhaps because they felt more supported and included in their schools (see Figure 2.15).[98]

Students' Connections to School Staff. When educators include LGBT-related content in their curriculum, they may also be sending a message that they are open to discussing LGBT-related issues with their students. As depicted in Figure 2.17, students in schools with an inclusive curriculum were more likely to have had a positive or helpful conversation with a teacher about LGBT issues (84.0% vs. 58.8%). They were also much more likely to say they felt comfortable discussing these issues with their teachers than students in schools without an inclusive curriculum (80.8% vs. 53.5%; see also Figure 2.17).[99]

Students' Connections to Peers and Peer Acceptance. The inclusion of positive portrayals of LGBT topics in the classroom may not only have a direct effect on LGBT students' experience, but may also help educate the general student body about LGBT issues and promote respect and understanding of LGBT people in general. Students who attended schools with an LGBT-inclusive curriculum were much more likely to report that their classmates were somewhat or very accepting of LGBT people (75.2% vs. 39.6%; see Figure 2.13).[100]

An LGBT-inclusive curriculum may encourage students to speak up when they encounter anti-LGBT language and bullying. Although overall rates of students' intervention in homophobic remarks were low, students in schools with an inclusive curriculum reported that other students were more than twice as likely to intervene most or all of the time as students in schools without an inclusive curriculum (13.2% vs. 5.4%; see Figure 2.18).[101] Peer acceptance, along with connections to school staff, may play a role in how LGBT students feel about their school. We found that students in schools with an inclusive curriculum reported higher levels of school belonging.[102]

Figure 2.16 Inclusive Curriculum and Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Experiencing Higher Levels of Victimization)

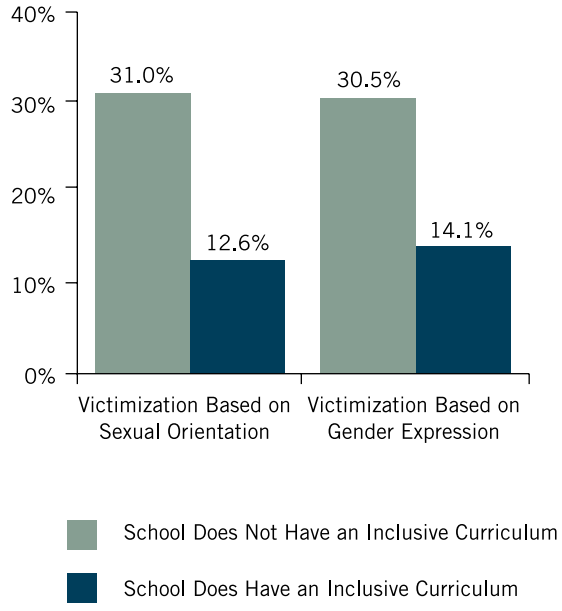
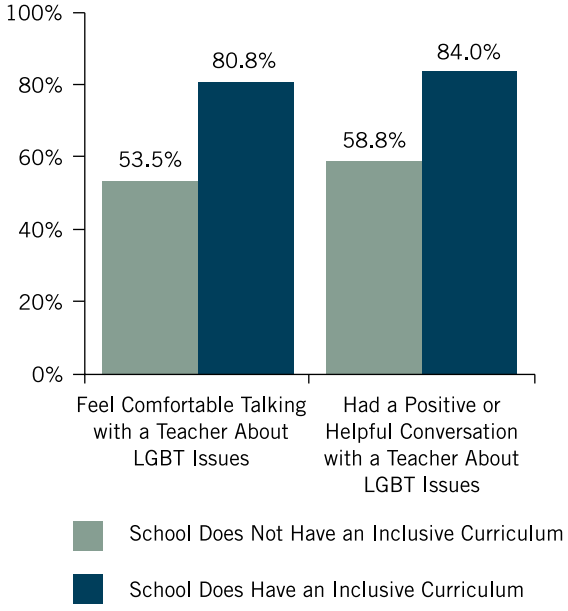


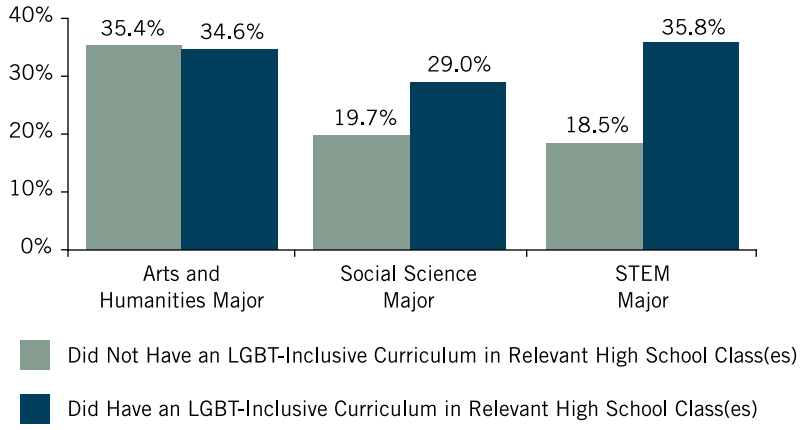
Figure 2.17 Inclusive Curriculum and Talking with Teachers About LGBT Issues



Insight on LGBT-Inclusive High School Curricula and LGBT Students' Intended College Major

Positive representations of LGBT people, history, and events in the school curriculum can help LGBT students feel like more valued members of the school community and facilitate a positive relationship with learning. Thus, being exposed to positive inclusions of LGBT-related topics in class could positively affect engagement with and interest in a particular subject area, and in turn, affect decision-making on future areas of study for LGBT students. For these reasons, we examined whether the intended college major for those LGBT high school seniors planning on attending at least a 4-year college or university varied by whether the students had been taught positive, LGBT-inclusive curricula in those high school classes. Specifically, we examined whether LGBT high school seniors were more likely to be interested in studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), Social Science, or Arts and Humanities if their high school classes included positive LGBT content in those particular areas.[103]

High School Curricular Inclusion and LGBT Students' Intended College Major
Percentage of LGBT High School Seniors Interested in Select College Majors (n = 1124)



There was a significant relationship between LGBT curricular inclusion in STEM classes in high school and reporting STEM as an intended major/field of study. LGBT high school seniors were twice as likely to be interested in a STEM major if they had been taught positive LGBT content in STEM-related high school classes (35.8% vs. 18.5%).[104] There was also a marginally significant relationship for students with intended Social Science majors, with 29.0% of students being interested in this field of study if they had had an LGBT-inclusive curriculum in their high school social science-related classes vs. 19.7% of students who had not had an inclusive curriculum.[105] There appeared to be no relationship between curricular inclusion in the Arts and Humanities and LGBT students' post-secondary interest in this field of study, although it is worth noting that Arts and Humanities classes were those in which LGBT topics were most likely to be included (see section *Availability of School-Based Resources and Supports*).

These findings add to the body of knowledge indicating that diversity in curricular inclusion can positively affect students' academic and career trajectories. Educators of all disciplines should pay greater attention to incorporating LGBT-related topics into the curriculum, and even more so in fields where LGBT youth appear to be less engaged, such as STEM (see section *Hostile School Climate and Educational Outcomes*). Furthermore, professional associations with a concern for diversity in their professional ranks, such as the American Marketing Association and the American Society for Engineering Education, may wish to pay attention to curricular inclusion within their disciplines at the secondary level in order to ensure a more diverse workforce in the future.

"I am so glad to have teachers who are cool with students being LGBT. If it weren't for them, I know I would've dropped out of high school."

Figure 2.18 Inclusive Curriculum and Student Intervention in Anti-LGBT Remarks
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Intervene Most or All of the Time)

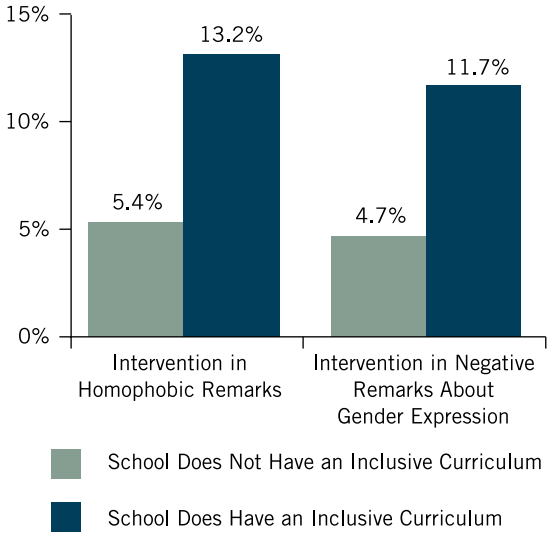
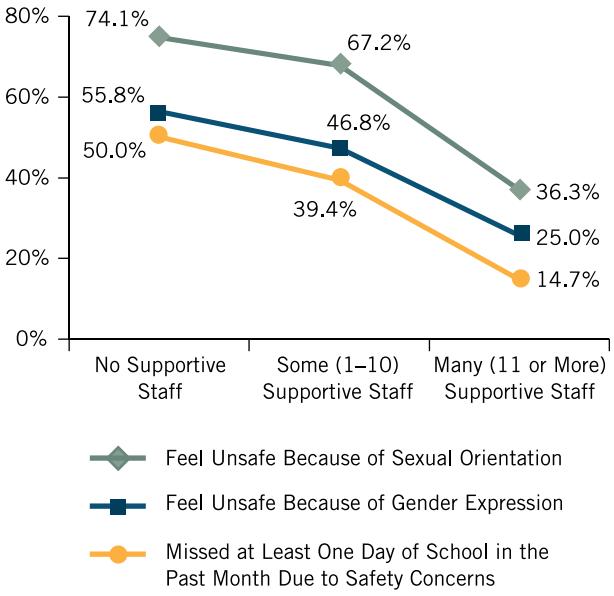


Figure 2.19 Supportive School Staff and Feelings of Safety and Missing School



Supportive School Personnel

Having supportive teachers and school staff can have a positive effect on the educational experiences of any student, increasing student motivation to learn and positive engagement in school.[106] Given that LGBT students often feel unsafe and unwelcome in school, having access to school personnel who provide support may be critical for creating better learning environments for LGBT students. Therefore, we examined the relationships between the presence of supportive staff and several indicators of school climate, finding that the presence of school staff supportive of LGBT students is one critical piece in improving the school climate.

School Safety and Absenteeism. Having staff supportive of LGBT students was directly related to feeling safer in school and missing fewer days of school. As shown in Figure 2.19, students with more supportive staff at their schools were less likely to feel unsafe due to their sexual orientation or gender expression, as well as much less likely to miss school because of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable.[107] For example, 36.3% of students with 11 or more supportive staff reported feeling unsafe because of their sexual orientation, compared to 74.1% of students with no supportive staff.

Achievement and Aspirations. Supportive staff members serve a vital role in creating an affirming learning environment that engages students and encourages them to strive academically. Therefore, it stands to reason that supportive staff would be related to LGBT students' educational outcomes. Students with more supportive staff:

- Were more likely to say they planned to attend college or pursue other post-secondary education after graduation: 12.0% of students with no supportive staff said they did not plan to pursue post-secondary education, compared to only 3.0% of students with 11 or more supportive educators (see Figure 2.20);[108] and

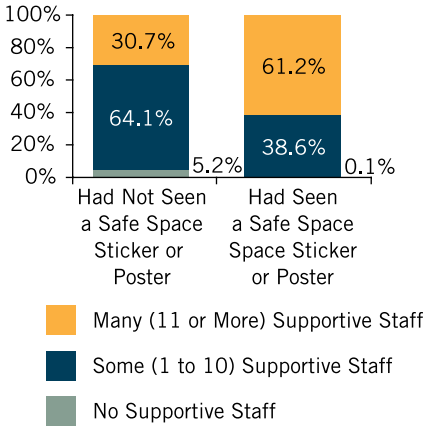
Insight on Safe Space Stickers and Posters

Supportive teachers and other school staff members serve an important function in the lives of LGBT youth, helping them feel safer in school as well as promoting their sense of school belonging, psychological well-being, and academic performance. Safe Space stickers and posters (shown to the right) are part of GLSEN's Safe Space Kit,[109] a resource aimed at making learning environments more positive for LGBT students. These posters and stickers are intended to provide visible evidence of staff members who are allies to LGBT students and who can be turned to for support or needed intervention.

In order to assess the visibility of Safe Space stickers and posters at school, as well as gauge their usefulness in helping students identify supportive school personnel, we asked students if they had seen Safe Space stickers or posters in their school. Over one quarter of LGBT students (26.1%) in this survey had spotted at least one Safe Space sticker or poster at their school, whereas nearly three quarters (70.4%) had not seen either a sticker or poster, and a small minority (3.5%) was not sure whether they had.

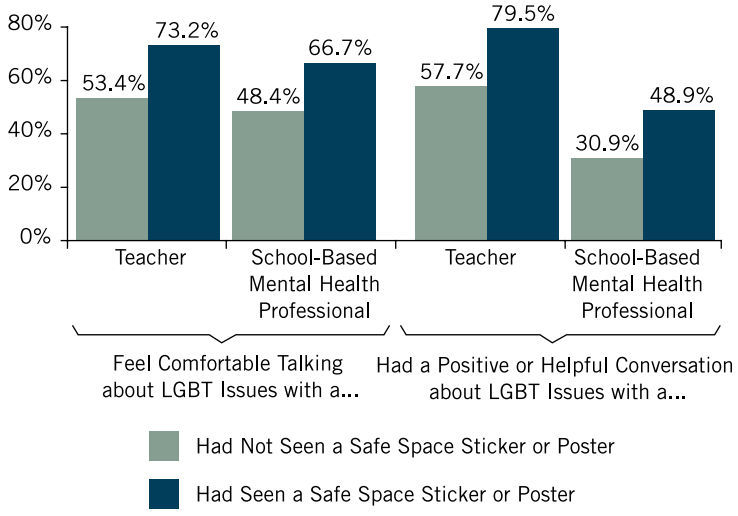
Safe Space stickers and posters were strongly associated with LGBT students being able to identify supportive teachers and other staff at their schools.[110] For instance, just under two thirds (61.2%) of students who had seen a Safe Space sticker or poster were able to identify 11 or more supportive staff in their schools, compared to less than a third (30.7%) of students who had not seen a Safe Space sticker or poster at school. Moreover, almost all students (>99%) who said they had seen a Safe Space sticker or poster were able to identify at least one supportive staff member.

Safe Space Stickers/Posters and Number of Supportive School Staff



In addition, Safe Space stickers and posters were associated with more positive attitudes toward school staff. As shown in the figure below, LGBT students who had seen a Safe Space sticker or poster in their school were more likely to feel comfortable talking about LGBT issues with teachers and school-based mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors).[111] In addition, LGBT students who saw a Safe Space sticker/poster were more likely to have had a positive or helpful conversation with staff about LGBT issues in the past year (see figure to the right).

Seeing a Safe Space Sticker or Poster and Talking with School Staff About LGBT Issues



Many school staff members serve as GSA advisors or incorporate LGBT-related issues into their classes, but for staff members who do not fulfill these roles, Safe Space materials offer a demonstrable way to show support for LGBT students. Furthermore, because many students are not exposed to the specific curriculum or teaching practices of all school staff, Safe Space stickers and posters provide a common and simple way for any staff member to demonstrate support for LGBT students.

- Reported higher GPAs than other students: students with no supportive staff reported an average GPA of 2.8, compared to a 3.3 GPA for students with 11 or more supportive staff (see Figure 2.21).[112]

As we saw with having a GSA and an inclusive curriculum, having supportive school personnel may also enhance a student's relationship with school. Students with more supportive staff members expressed higher levels of school belonging, which is also, in turn, a predictor of positive academic outcomes.[113–114]

Responses to Anti-LGBT Remarks and Victimization. School staff members serve a vital role in ensuring a safe learning environment for all students, and as such, should respond to biased language and bias-based victimization. When staff members intervened in homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression, students were less likely to feel unsafe and less likely to have missed school for safety reasons.[115] For example, as shown in Figure 2.22, 69.7% of students in schools where staff never intervened or only intervened some of the time in homophobic remarks said they had felt unsafe because of their sexual orientation or gender expression, compared to 47.5% of students in schools where staff intervened most or all of the time. Staff intervention was also related to fewer days of missing school (see Figure 2.23).[116] For example, more than one third (36.1%) of students in schools where school staff only sometimes or never intervened in homophobic language had missed school due to feeling unsafe, compared to only 19.3% of students in schools where staff members intervened most or all of the time.

The overarching goals of staff intervention are to protect students, prevent future victimization, and demonstrate to the student body that such actions will not be tolerated. Clear and appropriate actions on the part of school staff regarding harassment and assault can improve the school environment for LGBT youth and may also serve to deter future acts of victimization. In fact, as shown in Figure 2.24, when students believed that staff effectively addressed harassment and assault, they were less likely to feel unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation or gender expression (62.5% vs. 84.2%)[117] and less likely to miss school because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (27.3% vs. 57.0%).[118] In addition, as shown in Figure 2.25, students in schools where staff responded effectively experienced lower levels of victimization based on their sexual orientation or gender expression. For example, less than one third (29.8%) of students who reported that staff intervened effectively experienced higher levels of victimization based on gender expression compared to more than half (52.3%) of students who reported that staff responded ineffectively.[119]

Figure 2.20 Supportive School Staff and Educational Aspirations
(Percentage of LGBT Students Not Planning to Pursue Post-Secondary Education)

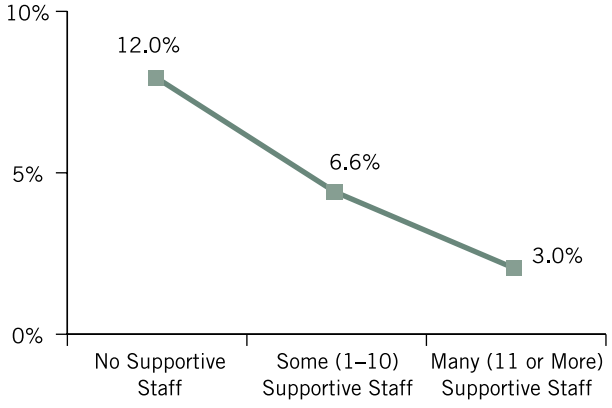


Figure 2.21 Supportive School Staff and Academic Achievement
(LGBT Students' Mean Reported Grade Point Average)

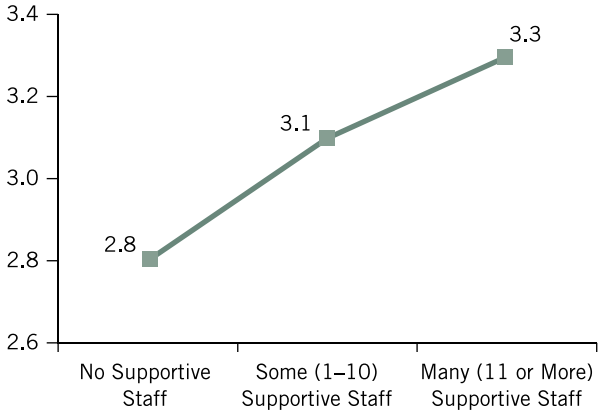


Figure 2.22 Staff Intervention in Anti-LGBT Remarks and Feelings of Safety in School
(Percentage of LGBT Students Who Feel Unsafe Because of Sexual Orientation or Gender Expression)

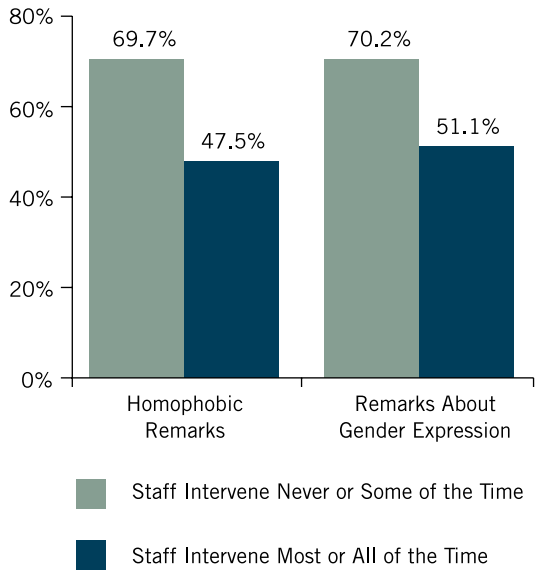


Figure 2.23 Staff Intervention in Anti-LGBT Remarks and Missing School Due to Feeling Unsafe
(Percentage of LGBT Students Who Had Missed at Least One Day of School in the Past Month)

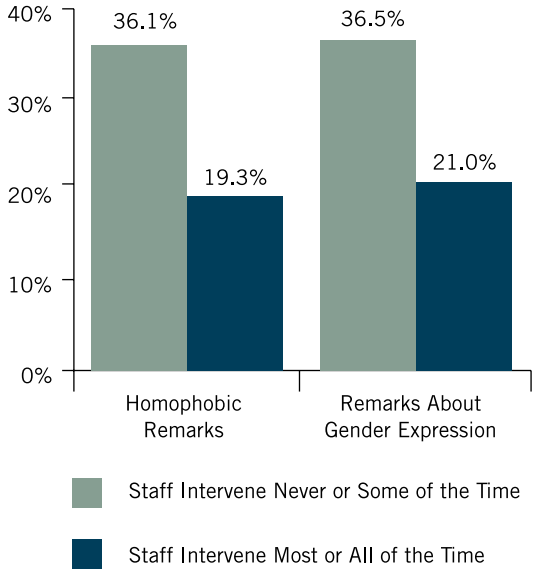


Figure 2.24 Effectiveness of Staff Response to Harassment/Assault and Feelings of Safety and Missing School

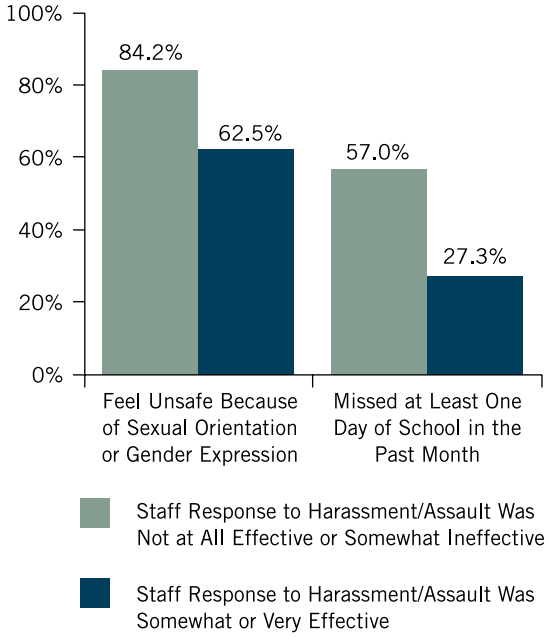
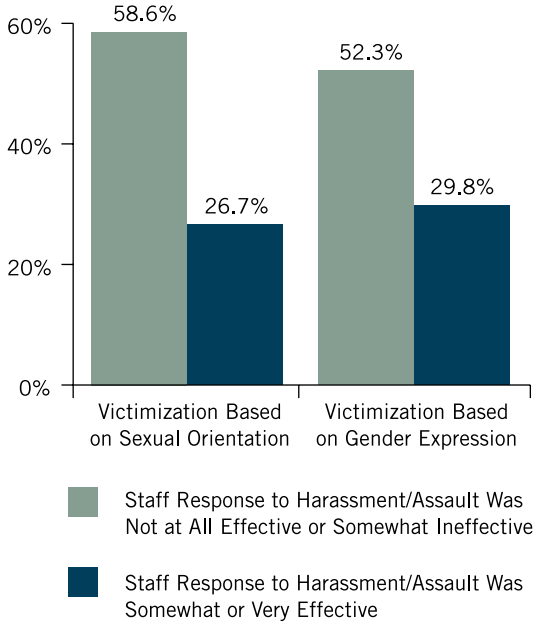


Figure 2.25 Effectiveness of Staff Response and Experiences of Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Experiencing Higher Levels of Victimization)



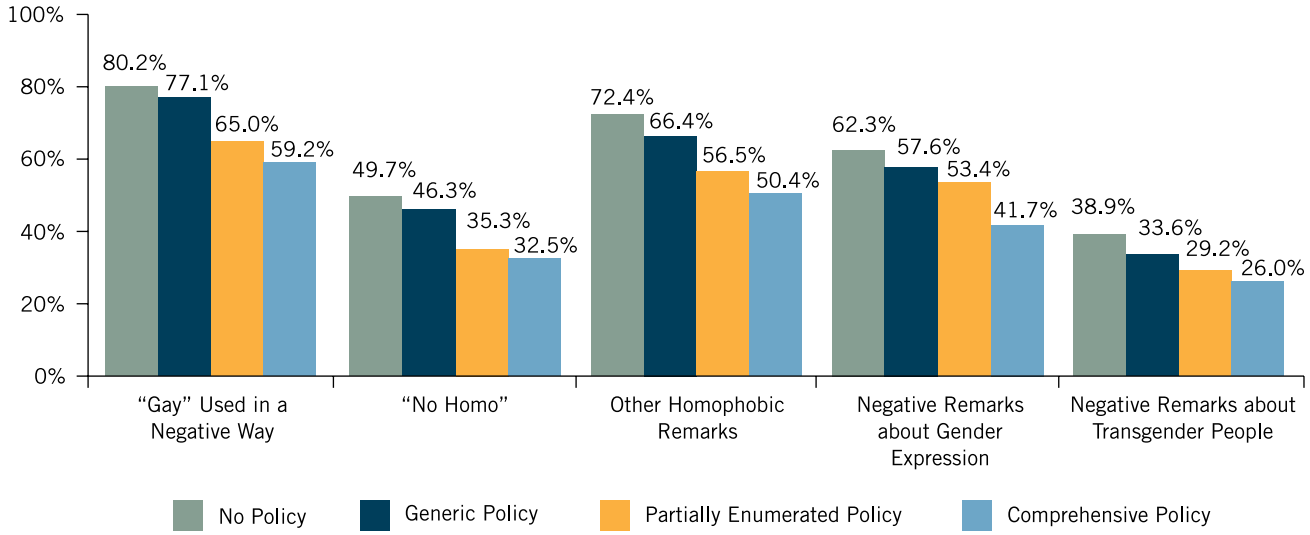
School Policies for Addressing Bullying, Harassment, and Assault

GLSEN believes that all students should have access to a safe learning environment, regardless of a student's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policies can contribute toward this goal in that they explicitly state protections from victimization based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Furthermore, comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policies may also provide school staff with the guidance needed to appropriately intervene when students use anti-LGBT language and when LGBT students report incidents of harassment and assault.

Anti-LGBT Language and School Safety. Students who attended schools with comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policies reported hearing anti-LGBT remarks less frequently than students in schools with no policy, a generic policy, or only a partially enumerated policy.[120] In general, the lowest rates of anti-LGBT language were heard in schools with comprehensive policies, followed by schools with partially enumerated policies (Figure 2.26). For example, 59.2% of students in schools with a comprehensive policy heard phrases like "that's so gay" often or frequently, compared to 65.0% of students in schools with partially enumerated policies, 77.1% in schools with generic policies, and 80.2% in schools with no policy.[121]

LGBT students in schools with a comprehensive policy also experienced significantly lower severities of victimization related to their sexual orientation and gender expression, compared to students in schools with no policy and students in schools with a generic policy.[122] For example, as shown in Figure 2.27, 19.5% of students in schools with a comprehensive policy reported experiencing higher levels of victimization based on their gender expression, compared to 28.3% of students in schools with a generic policy and 34.6% of students in schools with no policy. There were, however, no differences in levels of victimization between students in schools with comprehensive policies and those in schools with partially enumerated policies. Given that the majority of partially enumerated policies include sexual orientation and not gender identity, it is not surprising that there were no differences in victimization based on sexual orientation between partially and fully enumerated policies. It is more surprising that the inclusion of gender identity/expression in bullying/harassment policies may not have affected the incidence of victimization based on gender expression. Harassment based on gender expression is often directed at students who are perceived to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual; thus, this form of harassment may be seen as often being about sexual orientation, which is typically addressed in partially enumerated policies.

Figure 2.26 School Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policies and Frequency of Hearing Anti-LGBT Remarks
(Percentage of LGBT Students Hearing Remarks Often or Frequently)



Responses to Anti-LGBT Remarks and Victimization. School anti-bullying/harassment policies often provide guidance to educators in addressing incidents of harassment and biased remarks. Even though students reported, in general, that staff intervention is a rare occurrence, it was more common in schools with comprehensive policies. As shown in Figure 2.28, LGBT students in schools with comprehensive policies reported that staff intervened more frequently than those in schools with partially enumerated policies, generic policies, or no policy.[123] For instance, 29.2% of students in schools with comprehensive polices said teachers intervened most of the time when homophobic remarks were made, compared to 24.2% in schools with partially enumerated policies, 15.7% in schools with a generic policy, and 7.8% of schools with no policy (Figure 2.28).

Students' Reporting of Victimization. Policies may provide guidance to students on reporting bullying and harassment, but perhaps more importantly, policies may also signal that students' experiences of victimization will be addressed. Comprehensive school policies were, in fact, associated with increased student reporting of incidents to school staff, as well as increased effectiveness of response when they did report incidents to schools staff. Overall, LGBT students did not commonly report incidents of victimization to school staff, but they were more likely to do so in schools with a comprehensive policy. Students with a comprehensive policy were twice as likely to report that they reported incidents of victimization most of the time or always to school staff (see Figure 2.29).[124] Similarly, students in schools with comprehensive and partially enumerated policies were most likely to report that staff intervention was effective or very effective compared to students with generic policies and students with no policies (see Figure 2.29).[125] Schools with comprehensive policies and schools with partially enumerated policies did not differ from one another in students' perceptions of the effectiveness of staff members' response, perhaps because the more common target of harassment—sexual orientation—would likely be covered in partially enumerated and comprehensive policies alike.

Collectively, these findings suggest that comprehensive policies are more effective than other types of policies in promoting a safe school environment for LGBT students. They may be most effective in messaging to teachers and other school staff that responding to LGBT-based harassment is expected and vital. According to the students in our survey, school personnel intervened more often and more effectively when the school had a comprehensive policy. When school staff members respond effectively, it may also encourage students to report incidents of harassment: students who said that staff intervention was effective were, in fact, more likely to regularly report incidents of harassment to school staff. In addition, comprehensive policies may be effective in curtailing anti-LGBT language and behaviors among students — students in schools with comprehensive policies reported the lowest incidence of homophobic remarks and victimization. Thus, comprehensive policies may signal to all members of the school community that anti-LGBT victimization and biased remarks are not tolerated.

Figure 2.27 School Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policies and Experiences of Victimization
(Percentage of LGBT Students Experiencing Higher Levels of Victimization)

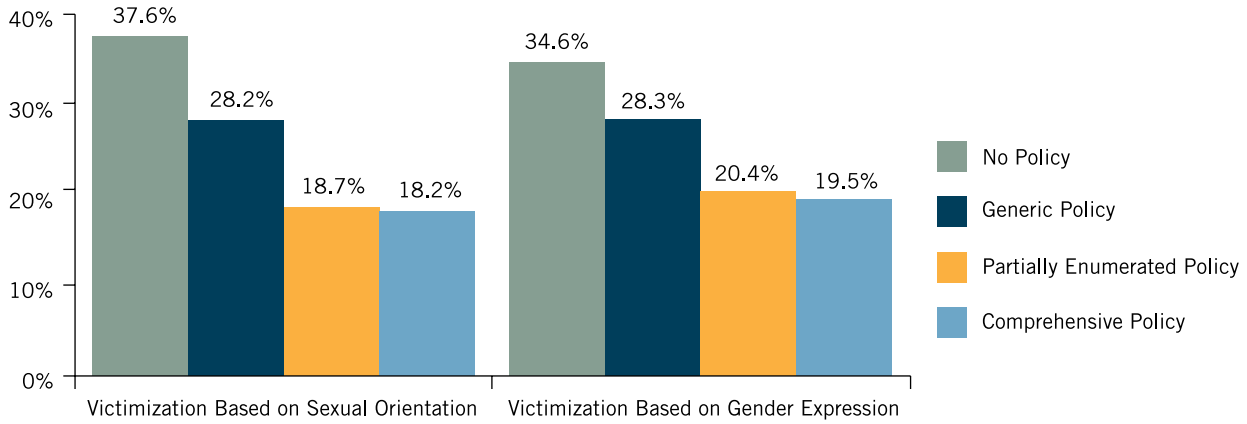


Figure 2.28 School Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policies and Staff Intervention in Anti-LGBT Remarks
(Percentage of LGBT Students Reporting That Staff Intervene Most of the Time or Always)

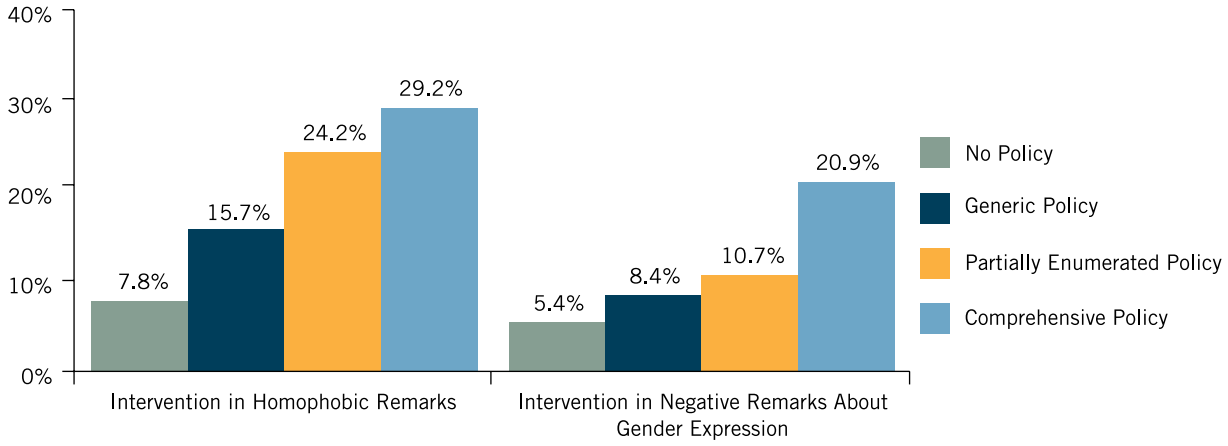
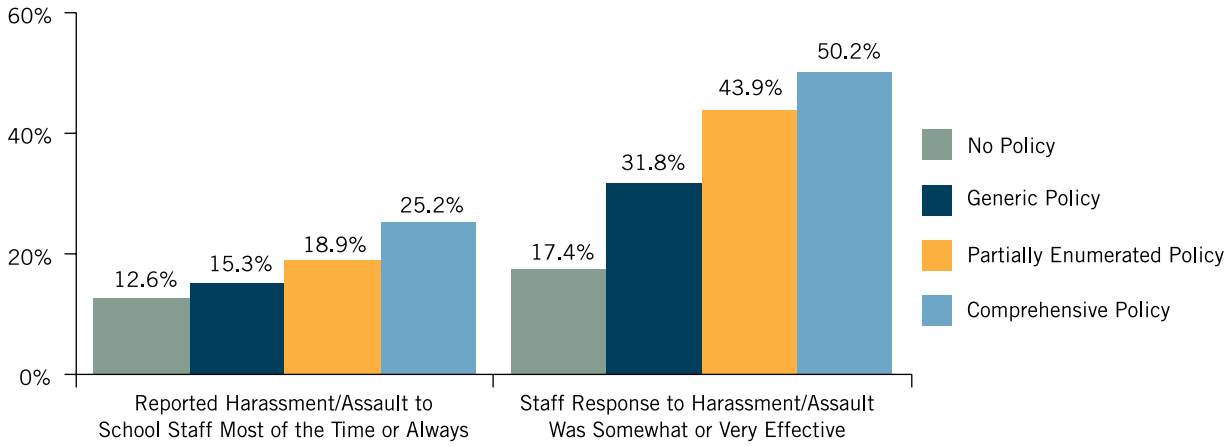
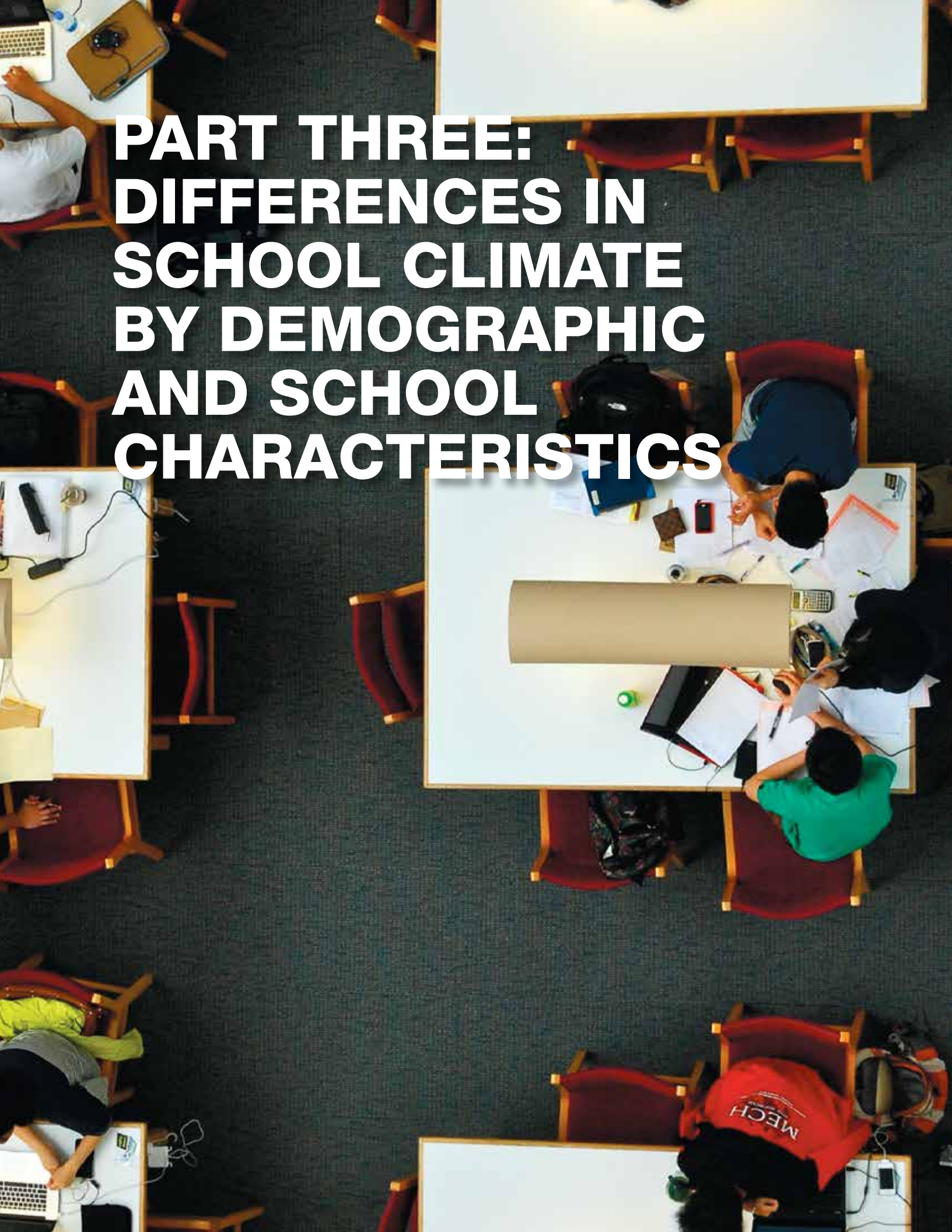


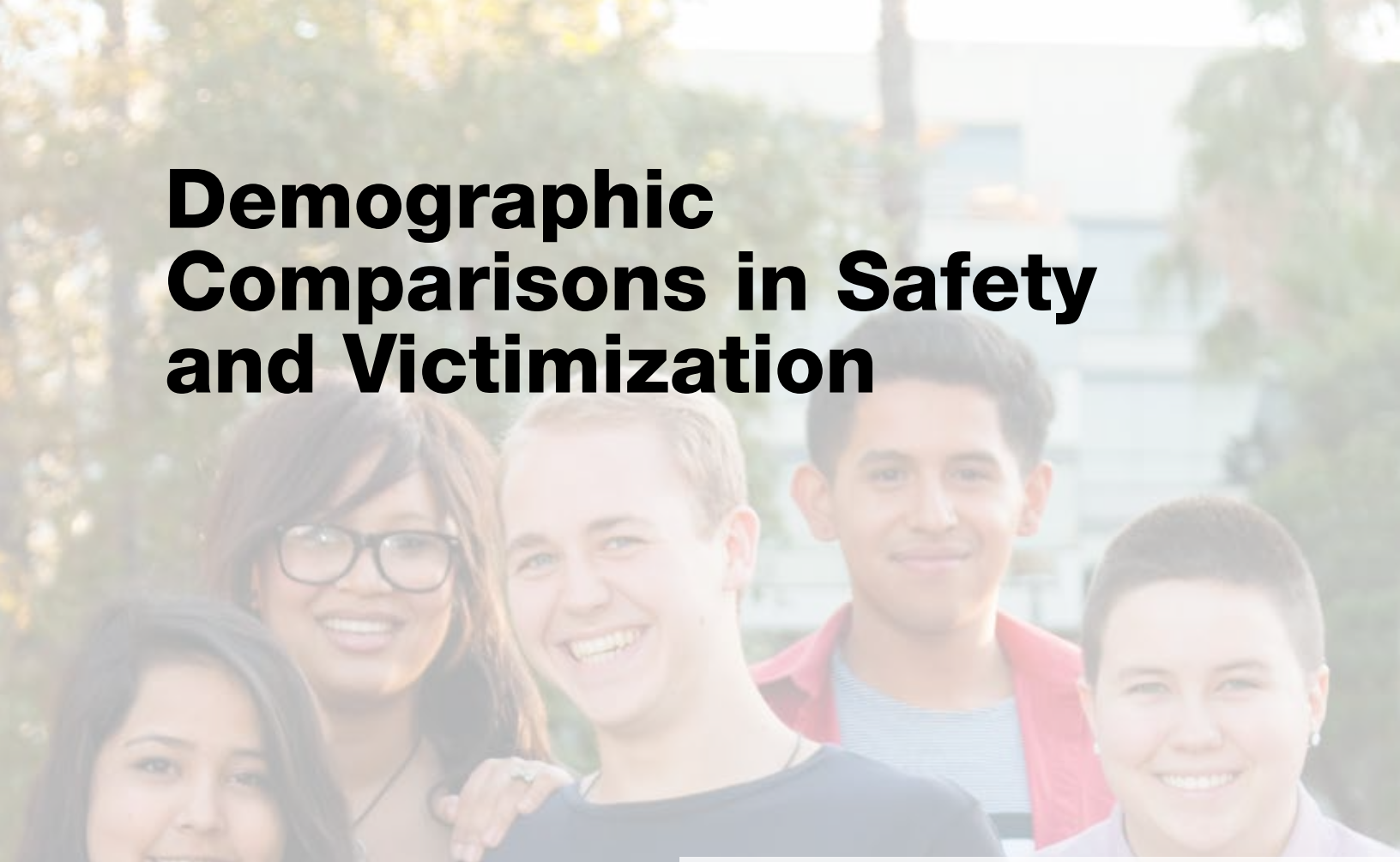
Figure 2.29 School Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policies, Reporting Harassment/Assault, and Effectiveness of Staff Response





PART THREE: DIFFERENCES IN SCHOOL CLIMATE BY DEMOGRAPHIC AND SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic Comparisons in Safety and Victimization



Key Findings

- Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander LGBT students were less likely than other groups to report feeling unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation or to experience victimization based on their sexual orientation or gender expression.
- White/European American LGBT students were less likely than other groups to feel unsafe because of their race/ethnicity or experience race/ethnicity-related victimization.
- Transgender students were more likely than other students to experience a hostile school climate.
- Gender nonconforming cisgender students were more victimized and felt less safe at school than cisgender students whose gender expression conformed to traditional norms.

LGBT students are a diverse population, and although they may share some similar experiences related to school climate, such as safety concerns related to their sexual orientation and gender expression, these experiences may also vary by students' personal characteristics. For this reason, we examined whether LGBT students' sense of safety and experiences of harassment and assault differed by race or ethnicity, gender identity, and gender expression. Although we would expect that students' own experiences of safety and harassment might vary by these demographic characteristics, we would not expect the availability of school-based LGBT-related resources (e.g., presence of GSAs or bullying/ harassment policies) to differ by students' personal characteristics, above and beyond the difference in the types of schools they attend. Thus, we did not examine relationships between student demographics and the availability of school-based resources.

Comparisons by Race or Ethnicity

We examined potential differences in LGBT students' experiences of safety and victimization at school based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and race/ethnicity, and where these experiences differed by racial/ethnic groups (White or European American, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, and Multiracial).[126]

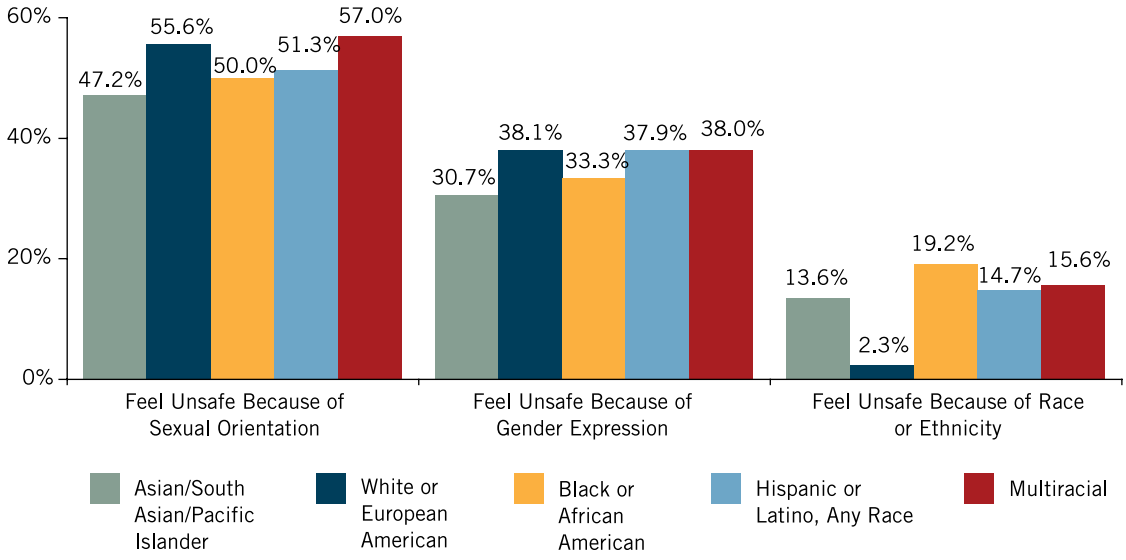
Across all racial/ethnic groups, sizable percentages of students reported feeling unsafe and being harassed at school because of their sexual orientation or gender expression, and significant portions of some groups reported negative experiences related to race/ethnicity. For example, as shown in Figure 3.1, about half of each group reported feeling unsafe based on sexual orientation at school. Nevertheless, there were a few significant differences across groups with regard to feeling unsafe and experiencing harassment and assault in school.

Feeling Unsafe in School. White/European American and Multiracial students were most likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation (see Figure 3.1), but there were no significant differences across groups in feeling unsafe because of gender expression. White/European American students were least likely to feel unsafe because of their race/ethnicity.[127]

Harassment and Assault. There were a few differences by race/ethnicity in students' experiences of harassment and assault based on sexual orientation and gender expression (see Figure 3.2 and 3.3):[128]

- Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students reported lower rates of verbal harassment based on sexual orientation;

Figure 3.1 Feelings of Safety in School by Race or Ethnicity
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Feel Unsafe)



- Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students reported lower rates of verbal harassment based on gender expression than all other students except African American/Black students;
- Multiracial students reported higher rates of physical harassment based on sexual orientation and gender expression than African American/Black students and Asian/South/Asian/Pacific Islander students; and
- There were no differences by race/ethnicity in rates of physical assault related to sexual orientation or gender expression.

When examining harassment and assault related to race/ethnicity, perhaps not surprisingly, White/European American students typically reported lower rates than their peers. For example, as shown in Figure 3.4, only 6.4% of White/European American students reported higher rates of verbal harassment related to race/ethnicity compared to over a quarter of students in the other racial/ethnic groups. There were no differences among the youth of color groups on experiences of harassment and assault related to race/ethnicity.

Figure 3.2 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Sexual Orientation by Race or Ethnicity
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

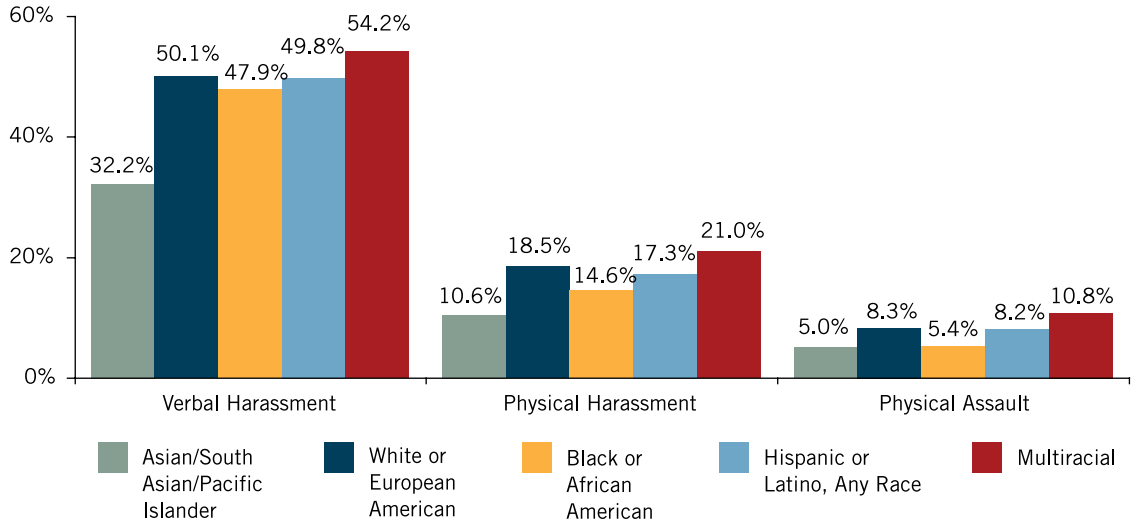
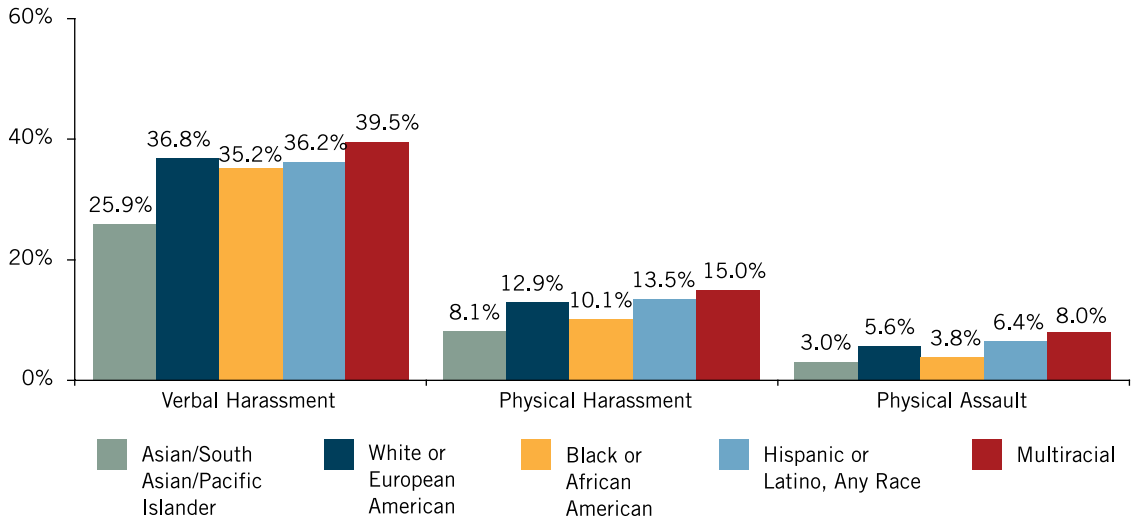


Figure 3.3 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Gender Expression by Race or Ethnicity
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)



It is important to note that despite these differences by racial/ethnic identity, significant numbers of LGBT students of all races or ethnicities reported hostile school experiences related to their sexual orientation and gender expression. These findings are consistent with results from prior installments of the GLSEN National School Climate Survey, where we have also found that Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander LGBT students experienced lower levels of anti-LGBT victimization in school. Yet, we cannot know from our data what factors underlie the differences found here. It may be that racial/ethnic differences are partly a function of the varying characteristics of schools that youth attend or the types of resources and supports available in those schools. These differences may be related to how race/ethnicity manifests itself within the school's social network or to other issues with peers, such as how out students are about their LGBT identity. Further research is needed that examines why there are these racial/ethnic differences in LGBT youth's experiences.

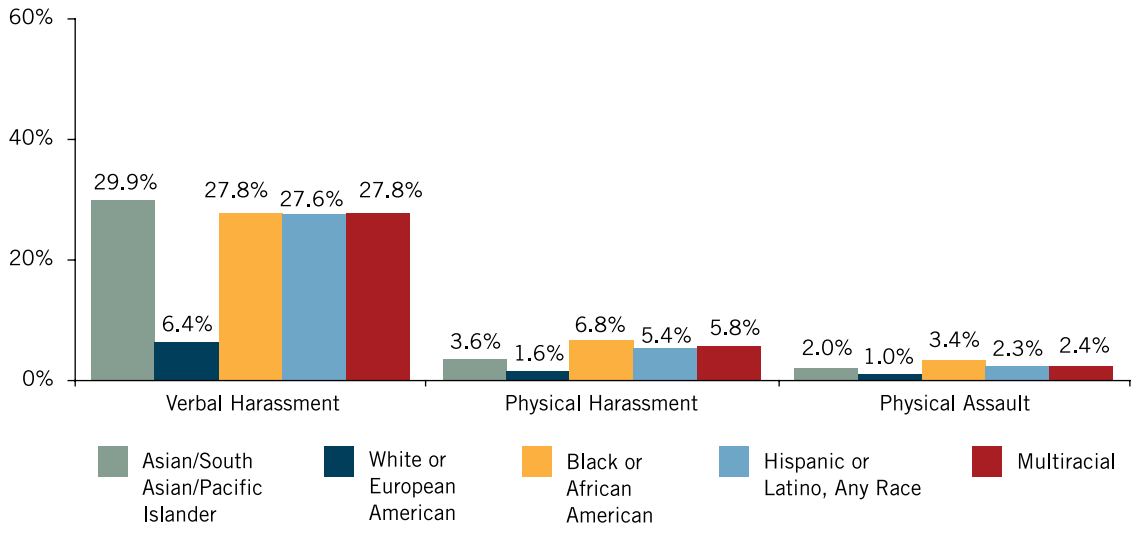
These findings indicate that LGBT students often experience safety and victimization differently, depending on their race/ethnicity. Other school experiences that may make students feel less welcome in school may also vary substantially by race/ethnicity, and we explore racial/ethnic differences further in the *Insight on School Discipline and the School-to-Prison Pipeline*.

Comparisons by Gender Identity

We also examined potential differences in LGBT students' experiences of safety and victimization by gender identity. In addition to differences that we might expect regarding experiences that are specifically related to gender identity and expression, there might also be differences by gender identity in experiences related to sexual orientation. Therefore, we examined gender differences in feeling unsafe and experiencing harassment or assault at school based on gender, gender expression, and sexual orientation, as well potential differences in avoiding school spaces because of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable. Across all gender groups (cisgender female, cisgender male, transgender, genderqueer, and students who wrote in another gender identity),[129] many students reported feeling unsafe and experiencing high frequencies of harassment or assault at school related to their gender, gender expression, and sexual orientation. However, there were some significant differences among gender groups.

Experiences of Transgender Students. Overall, transgender students were more likely than all other students to have negative experiences at school. As shown in Figures 3.5, 3.7, and 3.8, transgender students were more likely to have felt unsafe[130] and to experience victimization at school based on their gender expression or gender.[131] For example, three quarters (75.1%) of transgender students felt unsafe at school because of their gender expression, compared to two thirds (66.4%)

Figure 3.4 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Race/Ethnicity by Race or Ethnicity
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)



of genderqueer youth, just over half (55.0%) of students with other gender identities, and less than a third of cisgender females and males (26.0% and 31.1%, respectively; see Figure 3.5).

Across all gender groups, students experienced hostile school climate related to their sexual orientation. For example, more than half of students across gender groups felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation (see Figure 3.5). It is important to note that, in contrast to cisgender LGB students in our sample, transgender youth (and other non-cisgender youth) can identify as any sexual orientation, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, or heterosexual and, in fact, still faced higher rates of sexual orientation-based victimization[132] and were more likely than cisgender students to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation (see also Figures 3.6 and 3.5).[133]

As shown in the School Safety for LGBT Students section, sizable percentages of LGBT students avoided places at school because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, most notably spaces that are traditionally segregated by sex in schools such as bathrooms and locker rooms. For transgender and other non-cisgender students (e.g., genderqueer youth), using sex-segregated spaces at school may be particularly challenging.[134] We therefore also examined whether there were gender differences in the percentages of students who reported avoiding school bathrooms and locker rooms. Transgender students were more likely than all other students to avoid gender-segregated spaces, such as bathrooms

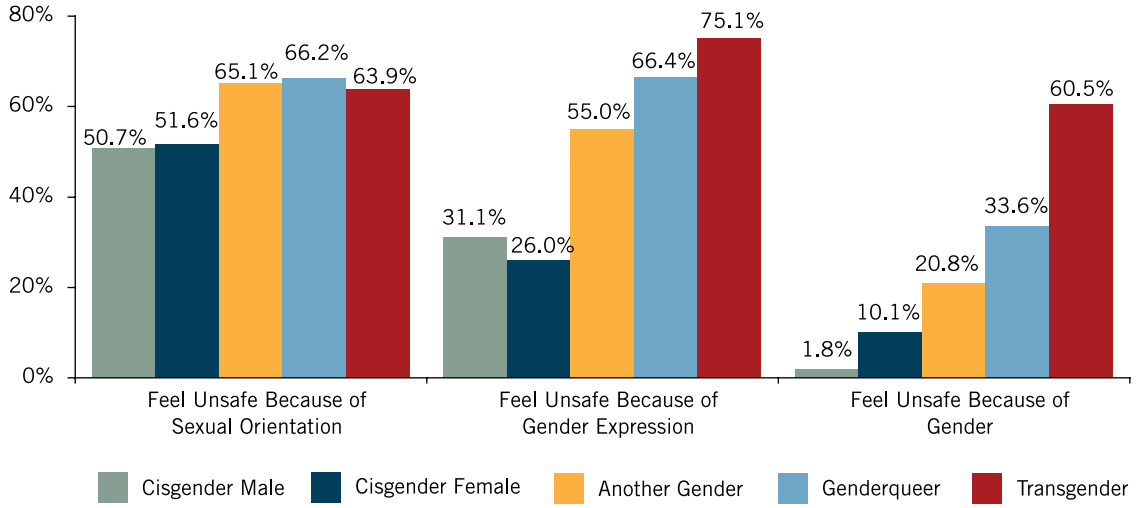
"Being transgender in high school is almost impossible because of how much harassment we receive."

and locker rooms, because of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable.[135] For example, almost two thirds of transgender students (63.4%) reported avoiding bathrooms, compared to less than 40% of all other groups of students (see Figure 3.9).

Although transgender students, as a group, experienced the most hostile school climates overall, there were also a few differences within the group of transgender students. Transgender males were most likely to feel unsafe based on gender expression and based on gender. There were, however, no significant differences among transgender students in actual experiences of victimization.[136] With regard to avoiding spaces because of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable, transgender females were most likely to avoid locker rooms, but there were no differences among transgender students with regard to avoiding bathrooms for safety reasons.[137]

Experiences of Genderqueer Students. In the 2013 NSCS, a substantial portion of students (10. 6%) identified their gender as genderqueer,

Figure 3.5 Feelings of Safety in School by Gender Identity
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Feel Unsafe)



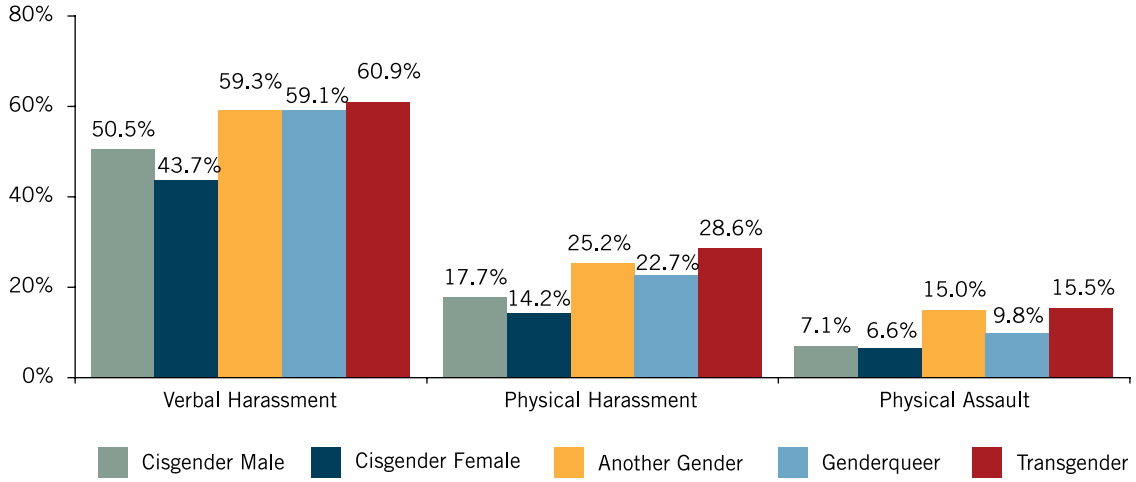
which generally refers to someone whose gender is outside the gender binary system of male or female. These genderqueer students also experienced a more hostile school climate than their cisgender peers. They were more likely to feel unsafe at school[138] and to experience victimization at school based on gender expression or gender compared to both cisgender males and females (see Figures 3.5, 3.7, and 3.8).[139] For example, more than half of genderqueer students (59.6%) were verbally harassed at school based on their gender expression sometimes, frequently, or often), compared to less than one in three cisgender males and females (29.2% and 27.3%, respectively). Although, similar to transgender students, genderqueer students can be of any sexual orientation (including heterosexual), they were still more likely than cisgender LGB students to feel unsafe[140] and experience victimization based on their sexual orientation (see also Figures 3.5 and 3.6).[141]

Genderqueer students were also more likely than cisgender females to avoid bathrooms and locker rooms because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (see Figure 3.9), but were not different from cisgender males in this regard.[142]

Experiences of Students with Other Non-cisgender Identities. A minority of students (4.3%) identified their gender as something other than cisgender, transgender, or genderqueer. For example, some students wrote in that they were "bigender" or "pangender." In that they identify outside of the traditional gender binary, these students are similar to their genderqueer peers, and in fact, there were no significant differences between these students and genderqueer students regarding safety and victimization. As reported above, these students with other gender identities had slightly better school experiences than transgender-identified students. Similar to transgender and genderqueer students, they were more likely to feel unsafe at school[143] and to experience victimization at schools based on gender expression or gender compared to both cisgender males and females and more likely than cisgender students to feel unsafe[144] and experience victimization based on their sexual orientation (see also Figures 3.5 and 3.6).[145] Students with other non-cisgender identities were also more likely than cisgender females to avoid bathrooms and locker rooms because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (see Figure 3.9), but were not different from cisgender males in this regard.[146]

Experiences of Cisgender LGB Students. Overall, cisgender LGB students experienced less hostile school climate than transgender students, genderqueer students, and students with other gender identities. However, it is important to note that most LGB students still faced hostile school climates. In addition, there were few differences between cisgender male and female students. Overall, cisgender female students experienced somewhat safer school environments regarding their sexual orientation or gender expression than their cisgender male peers (see Figures 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7). For example, just over a quarter (26.0%) of cisgender female students felt unsafe in school because of their gender expression, compared to

Figure 3.6 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Sexual Orientation by Gender Identity
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)



31.1% of cisgender males (see also Figure 3.5). However, cisgender females were more likely to face hostile school climate regarding their gender, in that they were more likely to feel unsafe because of their gender and be victimized based on gender (see Figures 3.5 and 3.8).[147–148] Cisgender females were less likely than cisgender males to avoid gender segregated spaces like locker rooms and bathrooms, even after accounting for levels of victimization (see Figure 3.9).[149]

Overall, we found that among the LGBT students in our sample, transgender students had the most negative experiences in school, generally followed by genderqueer students, students with other gender identities, and cisgender students. Our findings also highlight that although safety is a concern for many LGBT students regardless of their gender identity, transgender youth and other non-cisgender youth may face additional challenges at school. These challenges may extend beyond increased risk of harassment and assault, as we found differences not only regarding actual victimization, but also found disparities in terms of avoiding gender-segregated spaces (even after accounting for gender differences in victimization). Therefore, even in the absence of overt victimization while in a school bathroom or locker room, a student may experience other discriminatory or hostile behaviors from classmates or school staff that restricts access to these spaces. School staff need to be aware of the various ways that gender-segregated spaces may be particularly difficult for transgender and other non-cisgender youth to navigate, and work to ensure that all students have equal access to school facilities.

Figure 3.7 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Gender Expression by Gender Identity
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

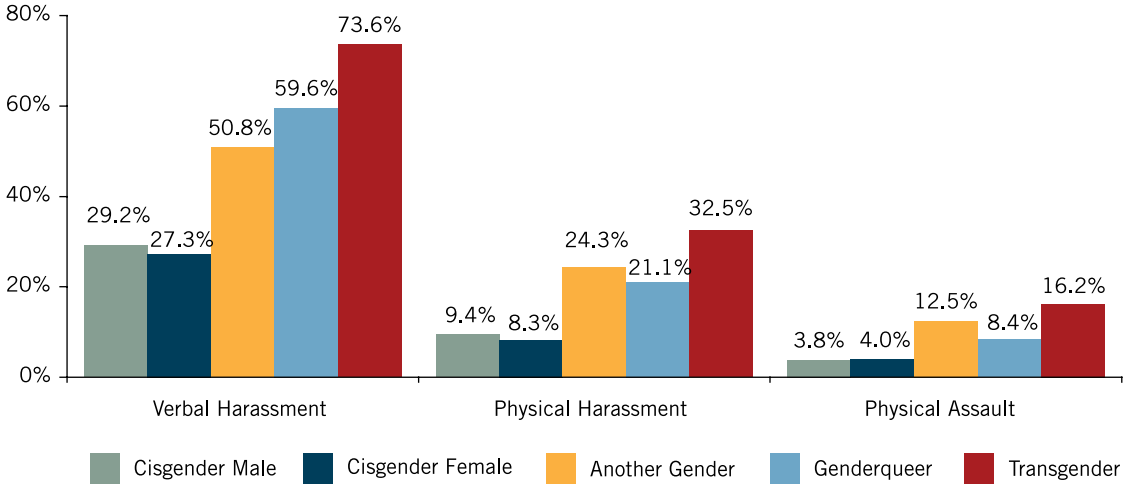


Figure 3.8 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Gender by Gender Identity
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

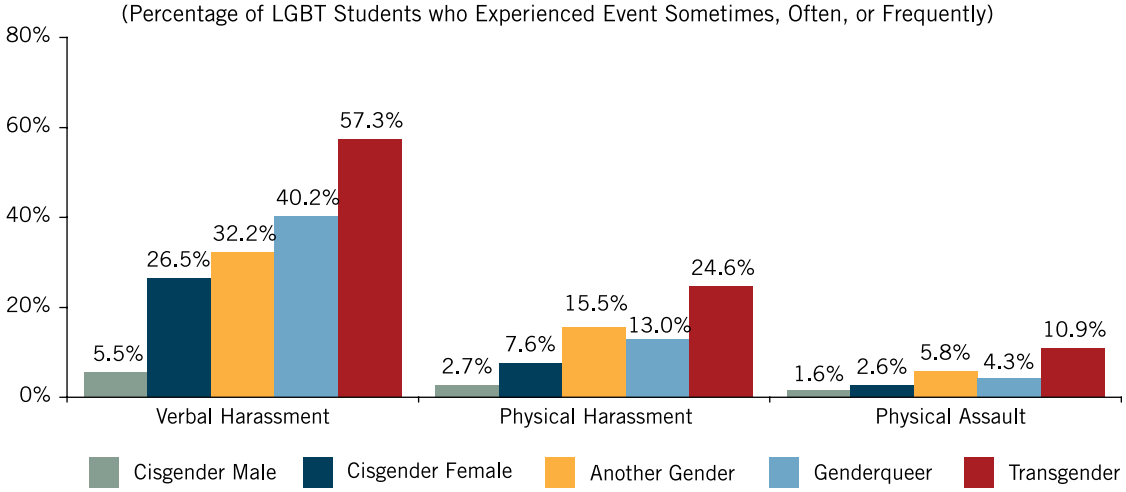
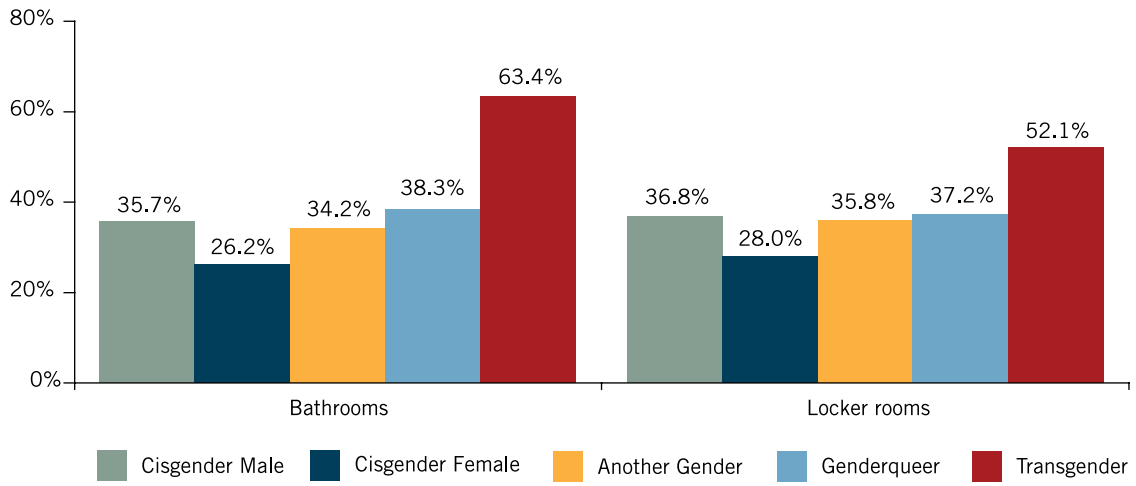


Figure 3.9 Percentage of LGBT Students Who Avoid Spaces at School Because They Feel Unsafe or Uncomfortable by Gender Identity
(Accounting for Severity of Victimization)



It is also important to acknowledge that most cisgender LGB students still experienced hostile school climates, and cisgender males experienced lower feelings of safety regarding sexual orientation and gender expression than cisgender females. It is possible that our society allows for more fluidity of sexual orientation and gender expression for females, particularly compared to males: for example, it is often considered more acceptable for a girl to dress or behave in ways deemed "masculine" than for a boy to dress or behave in a "feminine" manner.[150] Conversely, cisgender female students experienced greater victimization than cisgender males with regard to their gender, illustrating the additional ways that female students may experience sexism at school.

Comparisons by Gender Nonconformity

As reported in the previous section *Comparisons by Gender Identity*, we examined differences in LGBT students' school experiences by gender identity and found that students whose identities do not align with their sex assigned at birth (e.g., transgender and genderqueer students) faced more hostile school climates than their cisgender peers. A growing body of research indicates that LGBT youth whose gender expression does not conform to traditional expectations for their gender may also be at an elevated risk for victimization.[151] Indeed, LGBT students in our survey commonly reported hearing negative remarks about students' gender expression (how "masculine" or "feminine" someone appears to be) as well as having been personally victimized based on their gender expression. Therefore, we examined differences in LGBT students' experiences of safety, harassment, and assault based on their conformity or nonconformity to traditional gender expression norms.

Gender Expression of LGBT Students. In order to assess gender nonconformity among students in our survey, we asked participants about how other people at school would describe their gender expression: very masculine, mostly masculine, somewhat masculine, equally masculine and feminine, somewhat feminine, mostly feminine, very feminine, or none of these.

There was a great deal of variance among the responses, in general, and more so by gender identity. As shown in Figure 3.10, 62.5% of cisgender female students reported that their gender expression was "somewhat feminine," "mostly feminine" or "very feminine." In contrast, 37.2% of cisgender male students reported their gender expression as "somewhat masculine," "mostly masculine," or "very masculine." Transgender male students were much more likely than cisgender males to report their gender expression as masculine (74.2% compared to 37.2% of cisgender males).[152] Although a similar portion of transgender female and cisgender female students reported their gender expression as somewhere in the feminine spectrum (65.1% compared to 62.5%), transgender females were more likely than cisgender females to report their

expression specifically as "very feminine."[153] Students whose identity fell outside the male or female gender binary (i.e., genderqueer students, students with other gender identities and transgender students who did not also identify as solely male or female referred to as "another transgender identity") were more likely than other students to describe their gender expression as "equally masculine and feminine."

A small portion of students (1.2%) selected the option "none of these" and were given the opportunity to describe how they expressed their gender, and many of them indicated that it varied depending on context or their mood (e.g., "depends on the day"), or that it differed by appearance or behavior (e.g., "I dress feminine, but act macho"). Some others explained that they were just individuals and did not view themselves as masculine or feminine (e.g., "I'm just a person, not on a scale").

Gender Nonconformity and School Experiences. As reported in the previous section *Comparisons by Gender Identity*, youth whose gender identity was not the same as their assigned sex at birth (i.e., transgender, genderqueer, and other youth who are not cisgender) faced higher levels of victimization and lower levels of safety at school. However, even for cisgender students, traditional expectations regarding gender expression may negatively affect their school experiences. Therefore, within the sample of cisgender LGB students, we examined whether those students who were gender nonconforming reported higher levels of victimization and lower feelings of safety compared to those who were more gender conforming (students were considered gender nonconforming if they reported a gender expression that did not align with traditional gender norms: i.e., a male student who reported a gender expression on the feminine scale or as equally masculine and feminine). Although gender expression and sexual orientation are distinct concepts, they may be linked by perpetrators of harassment who may, often falsely, believe that nontraditional gender expression indicates a non-heterosexual sexual orientation. Thus, we examined differences in both gender expression- and sexual orientation-based victimization and safety.

We found that students who were gender nonconforming were more likely to feel unsafe in school and to report a more hostile school climate than their peers, specifically higher rates of victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression (see Figures 3.11 and 3.12).[154–155] For example, among LGB cisgender students, gender nonconforming students were twice as likely to report feeling unsafe at school because of their gender expression than their gender conforming peers (44.7% vs. 22.0%). Also among LGB cisgender students, almost half of the gender nonconforming students had been verbally

Figure 3.10 Gender Expression by Gender Identity
(LGBT Students who Selected an Option on the Masculine-Feminine Continuum; n = 7315)

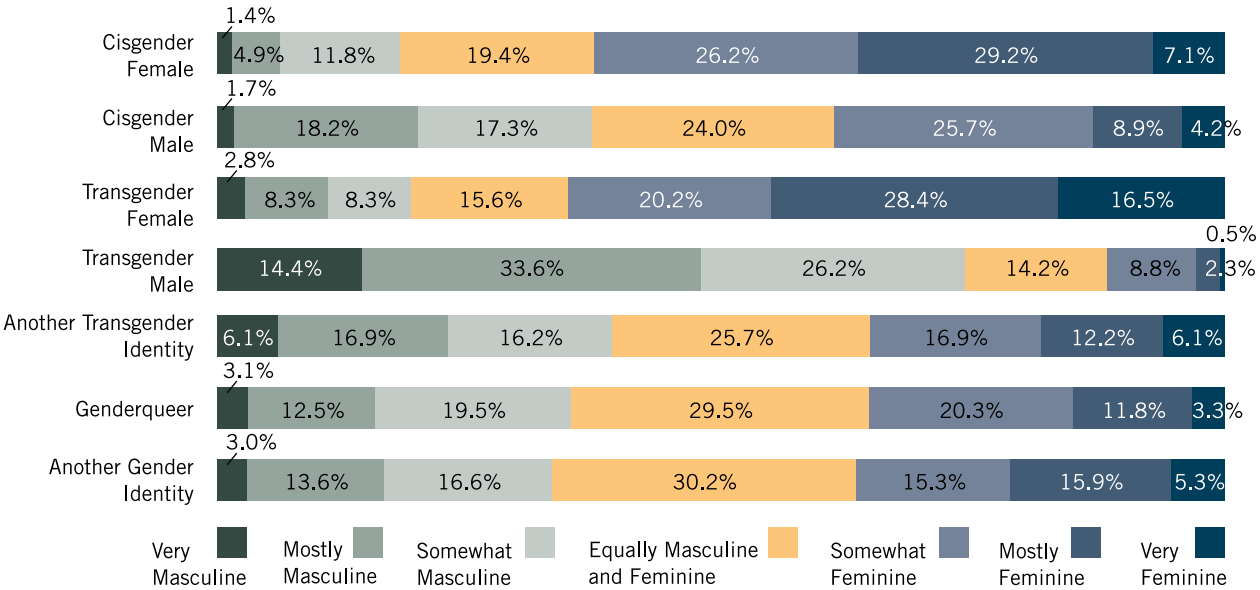
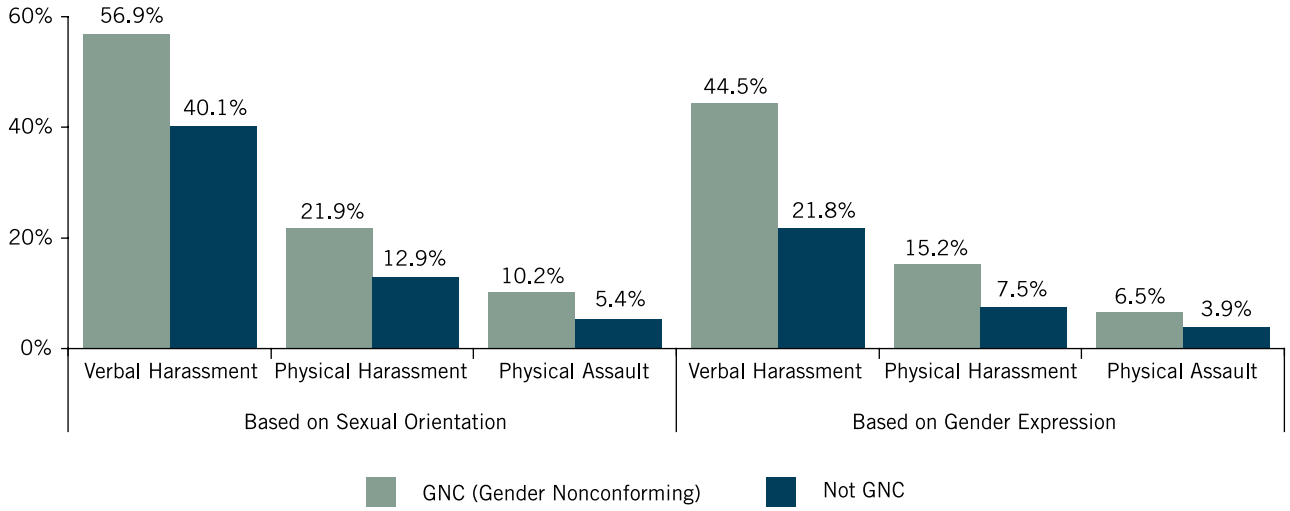


Figure 3.11 Experiences of Harassment and Assault by Gender Nonconformity
(Percentage of Cisgender LGB Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently; n = 6083)

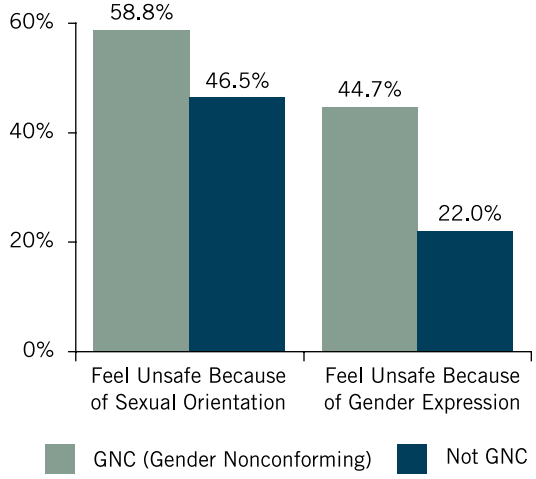


harassed based on their gender expression at least sometimes in school, compared to less than a quarter of their gender conforming peers (44.5% vs. 21.8%; see Figure 3.11).

It is important to note that gender nonconformity was not only related to higher rates of victimization based on gender expression, but also higher rates of victimization based on sexual orientation. Also, many LGBT students whose gender expression conformed to traditional norms commonly experienced victimization based on gender expression. These findings indicate that non-traditional (i.e., nonconforming) gender expression may make one a more visible target for various types of anti-LGBT harassment. It may also be that perpetrators of anti-LGBT behaviors in school may direct harassment related to gender expression toward any student they believe to be LGBT, regardless of their actual gender expression.

Schools may often reinforce adherence to traditional gender norms through formal policies or everyday practices of school staff, such as through dress codes which may be stigmatizing for some students (see the *Experiences of Discrimination at School* section of this report). Thus, schools should examine their policies and practices to ensure that they are not discriminatory towards students who are gender nonconforming. Furthermore, safe school advocates should ensure that their efforts to improve school climate for LGBT students explicitly address issues of gender expression and gender nonconformity, in addition to those of sexual orientation.

Figure 3.12 Feelings of Safety in School by Gender Nonconformity
(Percentage of Cisgender LGB Students who Feel Usafe; n = 6101)



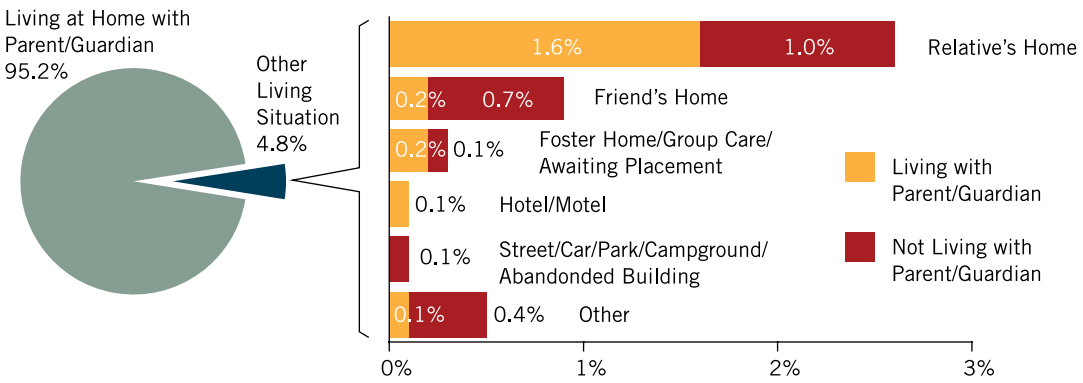
Taken together, the findings in this section regarding demographic differences in LGBT students' school experiences by race/ethnicity, gender identity, and gender expression highlight the importance of examining the experiences of various subpopulations within the larger population of LGBT students. Clearly, in order to ensure that all LGBT youth feel safe and welcome in schools, schools need to address not only homophobia, but also transphobia, racism, sexism, and other forms of bias that affect all youth.

Insight on Housing and Homelessness of LGBT Students

Over 500,000 U.S. middle and high school students are homeless or live in unstable housing,[156] and recent research indicates that LGBT youth are at disproportionate risk for becoming homeless.[157] In addition to the social and economic factors that generally put some youth and families at risk of less stable housing, LGBT youth may face specific risk factors such as increased levels of victimization and discrimination in both their homes and their schools.[158] Research among the general population indicates that youth living in unstable housing are at risk for lower educational attainment and achievement.[159] Therefore, we wanted to examine the relationship between housing status and educational outcomes for LGBT students in our survey.

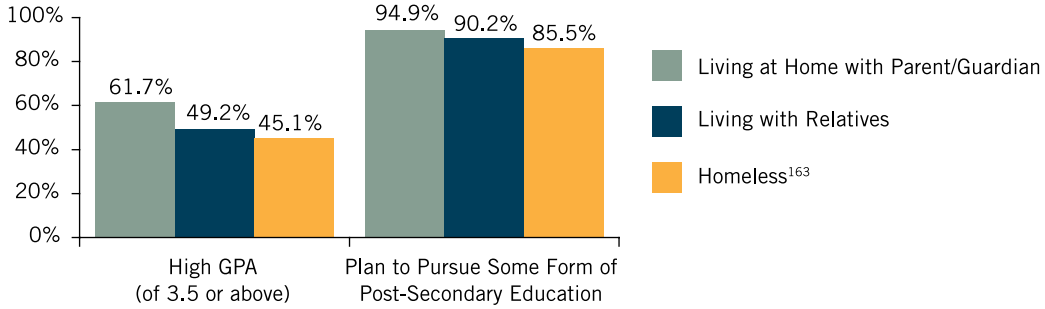
Although a vast majority (95.2%) of LGBT students in our survey lived in a home with their parents/guardians, as shown in the figure below, a small portion (4.8%) reported living in unstable conditions, such as at a relative's (2.6%) or a friend's home (0.9%), in a group home or other transitional living (e.g., awaiting foster care placement; 0.3%), or a lack of consistent housing altogether (i.e., living in hotel/motel, on the street; 0.2%). It is important to note that this is a survey of youth who were enrolled in school in the 2012–2013 school year. Given that many homeless LGBT youth may have dropped out or been pushed out of school,[160] it is likely that the percentage of LGBT youth in general who are homeless is greater than the percentages we found for LGBT students in our survey.

Housing Status of LGBT Students



Among LGBT students in our survey, we found that youth in less stable housing had poorer educational outcomes, including lower GPAs and lower educational aspirations (see figure below).[161–162] For example, 94.9% of LGBT students who lived in their parent/guardian's home planned to pursue some form of education after high school, compared to fewer than nine in ten (85.8%) homeless LGBT students.

Educational Outcomes and Housing Status of LGBT Students



Given the extent and educational impact of housing instability for LGBT youth, schools should ensure that LGBT youth have access to appropriate housing services and address potential risk factors for LGBT homelessness, including hostile school climates. It is worth noting that the vast majority of homeless LGBT youth in our survey plan to continue their education beyond high school. Thus, it is crucial that schools provide the supports and opportunities to help these youth achieve their educational goals. Advocates for LGBT students should promote practices and policies that support the educational achievement of homeless youth, including the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act,[164] which requires states to provide supports and ensure the rights of homeless youth to receive an education.[165]

Comparisons of Biased Language, Victimization, and Resources and Supports by School Characteristics

Key Findings

- Compared to high school students, LGBT students in middle school were more likely to experience harassment and assault based on sexual orientation or gender expression, and less likely to have access to LGBT-related resources and supports.
- Students in non-religious private schools were less likely to hear homophobic remarks than students in public or religious schools and more likely to have access to LGBT-related resources and supports.
- Students from schools in the South and Midwest and from schools in small towns or rural areas were most likely to hear anti-LGBT remarks. They were also more likely to be harassed or assaulted based on sexual orientation or gender expression.
- Students from schools in the South, the Midwest, and small towns or rural areas were least likely to have access to LGBT-related resources and supports.

Just as LGBT students' school experiences may vary by certain personal demographic characteristics, their experiences may also vary based on the characteristics of their schools. For instance, certain types of schools might be more or less accepting of LGBT students or may be more or less likely to have important LGBT-related resources and supports. Therefore, we examined students' reports of hearing biased language, experiences of victimization, and the availability of LGBT-related resources and supports by school level, school type, geographic region, and locale.

Comparisons by School Level

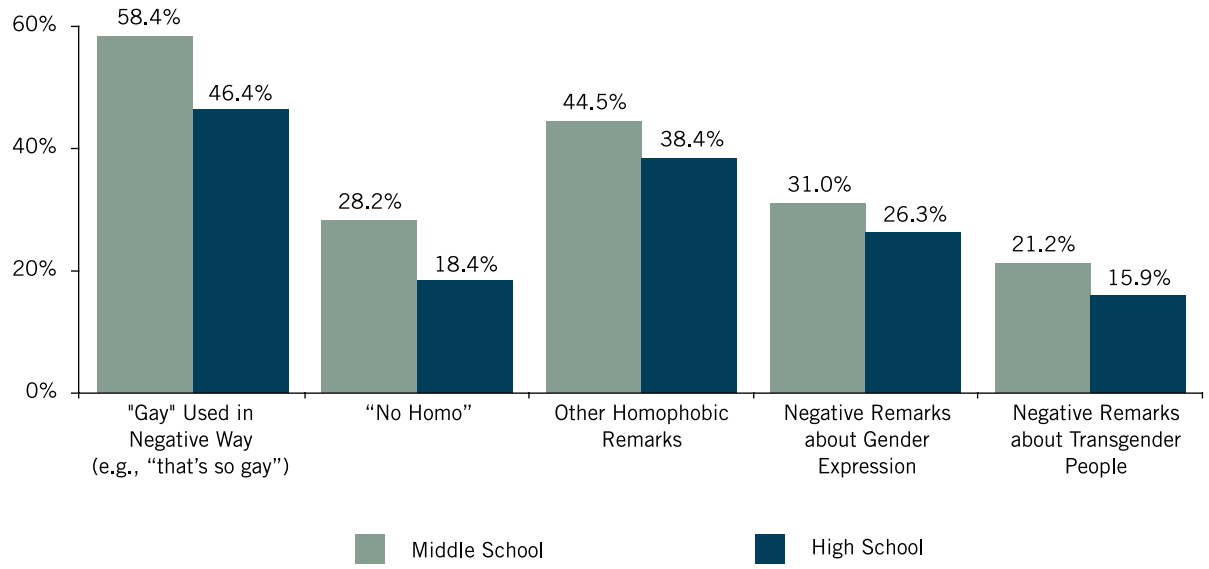
LGBT students in middle school may face more bullying and harassment than their high school peers, as research has shown that to be the case among the general student population.[166] It is also possible that LGBT-specific resources and supports may be less available in middle schools. Thus, we examined differences in anti-LGBT language, experiences of victimization, and availability of resources and supports based on school level.[167] On all of the indicators of school climate, middle school students fared worse than high school students — middle schools students experienced more biased language and direct victimization and had fewer LGBT-related resources and supports.

Anti-LGBT Language in School. All types of anti-LGBT remarks — homophobic remarks ("gay" in a negative way, "no homo," and other homophobic remarks), negative remarks about gender expression, and negative remarks about transgender people — were heard more frequently by students in middle school than students in high school (see Figure 3.13).[168] For example, the majority (58.4%) of LGBT middle school students reported hearing "gay" used in a negative way frequently at school, compared to 46.4% of LGBT high school students.

Experiences of Victimization. Compared to high school students, middle school students experienced higher levels of victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression (see Figure 3.14).[169] For example, over two thirds (68.1%) of LGBT middle school students experienced verbal harassment based on their sexual orientation sometimes, often, or frequently, compared to half (49.3%) of LGBT high school students.

School Resources and Supports. Students in middle schools were less likely than students in high schools to have access to each of the LGBT-related resources and supports at school (see Figure 3.15),[170] and the disparity between middle

Figure 3.13 Anti-LGBT Remarks by School Level
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Hear Remarks Frequently)



and high school students was greatest for GSAs (7.5% for middle school students vs. 58.5% for high school students). It may be that high schools have, in general, more extracurricular clubs than middle schools. Another possible explanation for this disparity is that GSAs, like other non-curricular clubs, are student-initiated, whereas the other LGBT-related resources and supports assessed here are typically dependent on educators to implement. It may be that middle school students have fewer opportunities to start clubs. It may also be that developmentally, high school students are more prepared to initiate and sustain a school club and to effectively respond to opposition from the school or community than middle school students. Given the benefits GSAs may provide to LGBT students, it may be particularly important for safe school advocates to devote resources to helping middle school students start and sustain GSAs.

Although middle schools had fewer LGBT-related school resources than high schools in general, they were not different from high schools in terms of having a comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policy. This is perhaps unsurprising given that for public schools (attended by the vast majority of our sample), formal policies are generally adopted at the district level as opposed to the school level. As such, middle and high schools in any given district would be expected to have the same policies.

Overall, our findings are consistent with research on the general population of students in that LGBT students in middle schools face more hostile school climates than LGBT students in high schools. In addition to general developmental trends about school violence, it may also be that adolescents become more accepting of LGBT people and less tolerant of anti-LGBT harassment as they grow older.[171] Further, not only did middle school students experience more victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression than those in high school, they were much less likely to report that their schools had resources and supports that can help to create a safer and more affirming environment. Given the higher incidence of victimization of LGBT students in middle schools, school districts should devote greater attention to addressing anti-LGBT bias in the younger grades.

Comparisons by School Type

As with the general population of students in the United States, most of the LGBT students in our sample (89.2%) attended public schools. Nevertheless, we wanted to examine whether students' experiences with biased language, victimization, and the availability of LGBT-related resources and supports varied based on the type of school they attended — public, religious, or private non-religious schools.

Figure 3.14 Experiences of Harassment and Assault by School Level
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

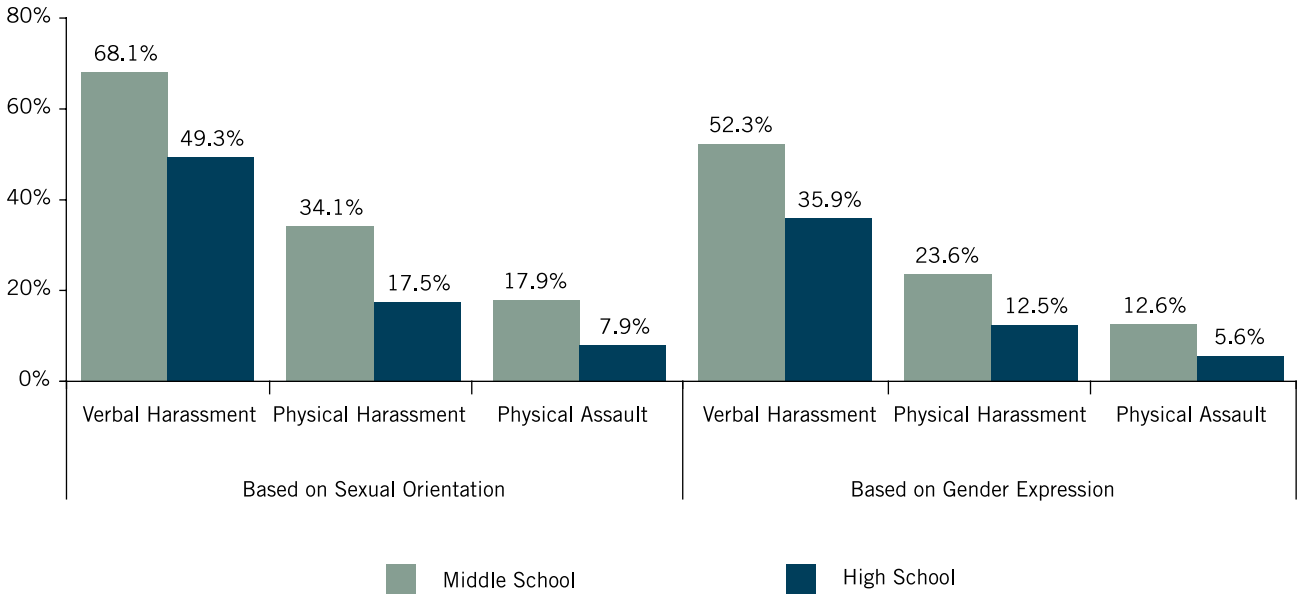
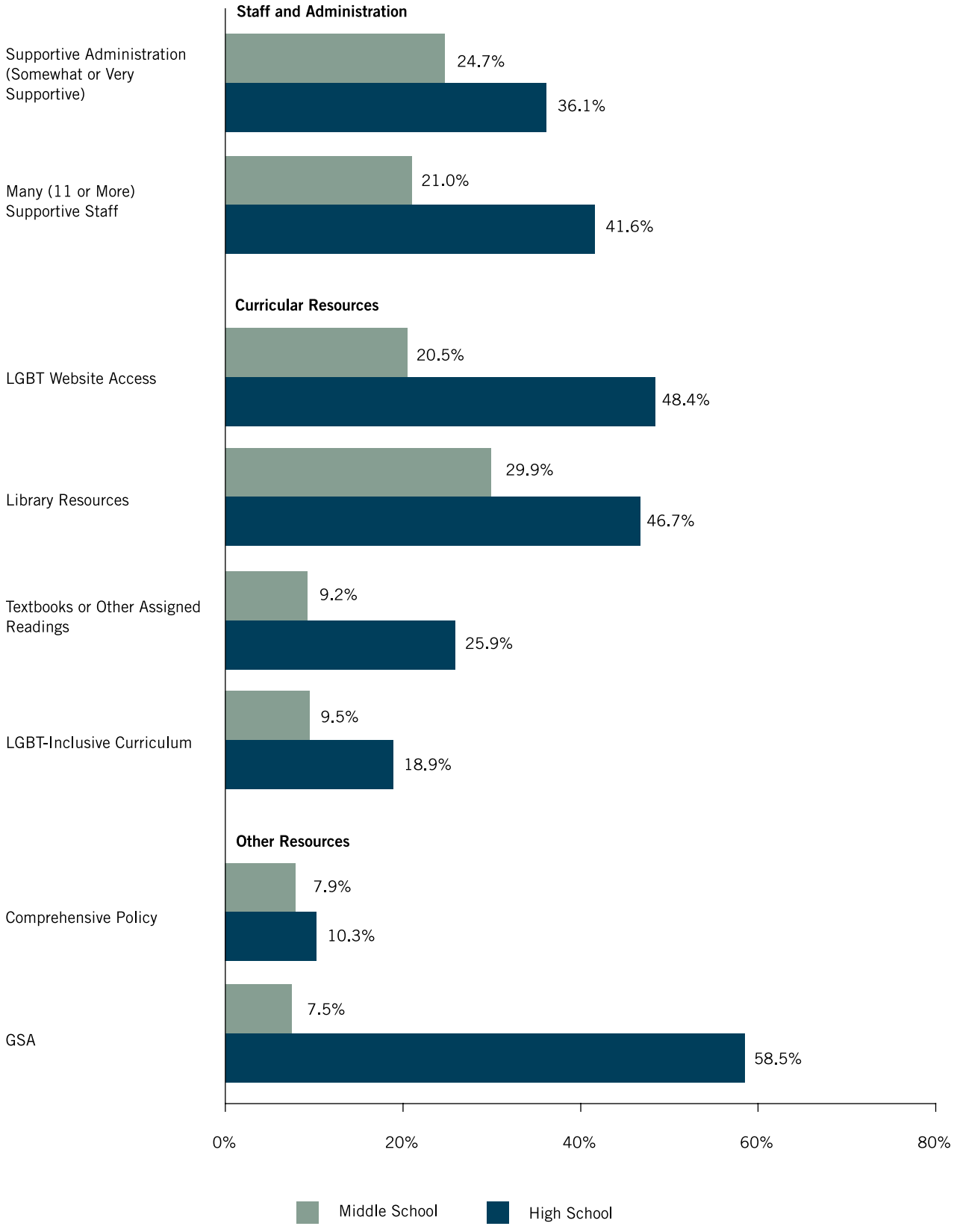


Figure 3.15 Availability of LGBT-Related Resources and Supports by School Level



Anti-LGBT Language in School. Overall, LGBT students in private non-religious schools were least likely to hear anti-LGBT language, whereas LGBT students in public schools were most likely to hear this type of language (see Figure 3.16).[172] Specifically:

- Private school students heard the word "gay" used in a negative way, the expression "no homo," and other types of homophobic language (i.e., "fag," "dyke") less often than students in religious schools and in public schools;
- Public school students were more likely than religious school students to hear all types of homophobic remarks and to hear negative remarks about gender expression; and
- Public school students were not different from private non-religious school students in the frequency of hearing negative remarks about gender expression.

Experiences of Victimization. Similar to reports of biased language, LGBT students in public schools reported the highest levels of victimization (see Figures 3.17 and 3.18).[173] Specifically:

Figure 3.16 Anti-LGBT Remarks by School Type
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Hear Remarks Frequently)

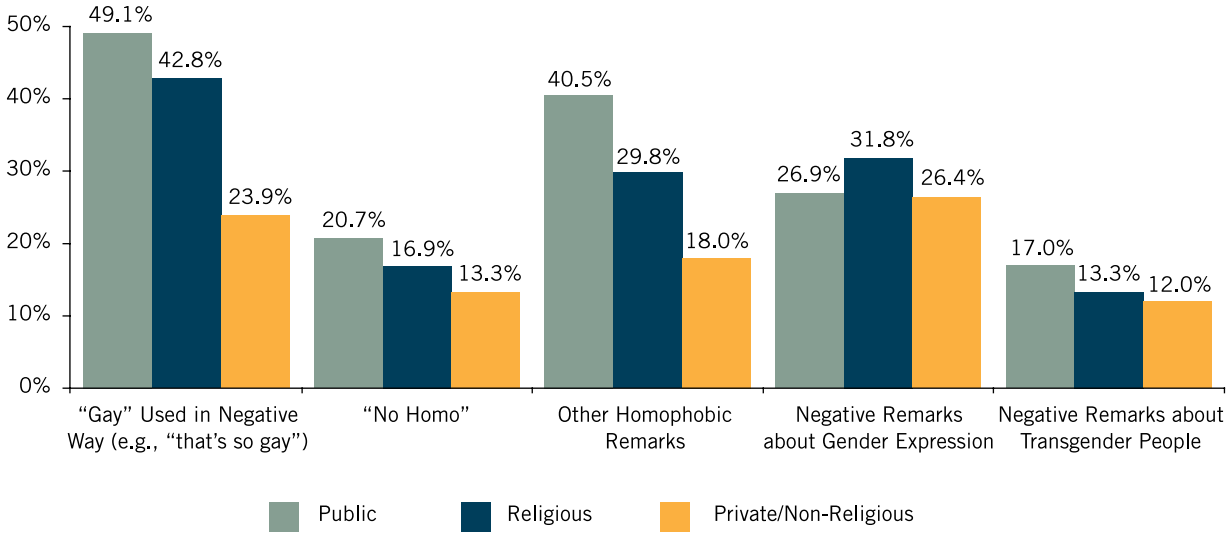
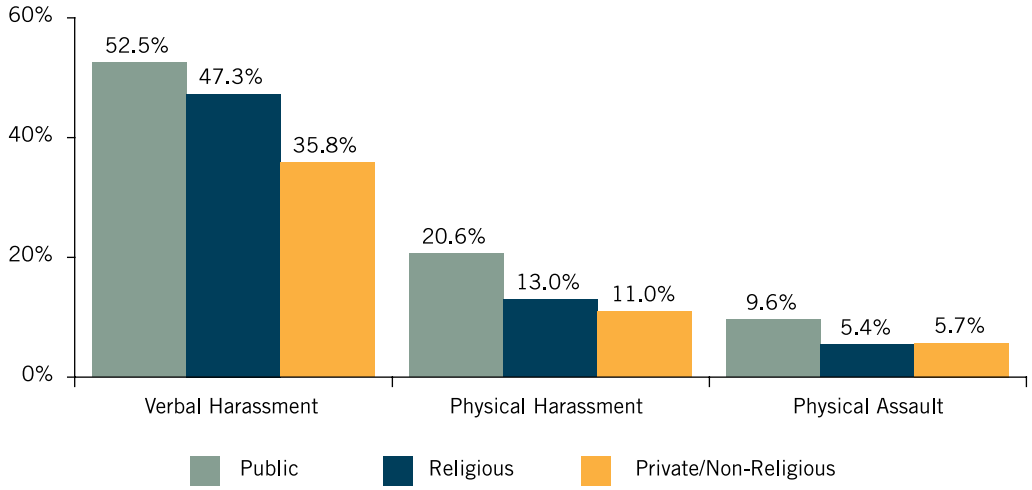


Figure 3.17 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Sexual Orientation by School Type
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)



- Public school students experienced more victimization based on sexual orientation than both private and religious school students;
- Public school students experienced more victimization based on gender expression than private school students (Public school and religious school students were not significantly different on victimization based on gender expression); and
- There were no differences in victimization based on sexual orientation or gender expression between students in private and religious schools.

School Resources and Supports. There were significant differences in the availability of LGBT-related resources and supports by school type. Overall, students in private schools were more likely to have access to all LGBT-related resources and supports than students in public schools. Students in private schools were also more likely to have these resources than students in religious schools, with the exception of LGBT-inclusive content in textbooks or assigned readings (see Figure 3.19).[174] Students in public schools were also more likely than students in religious schools to have access to LGBT-related resources in school with two notable exceptions: public and religious school students did not differ with regard to positive inclusion of LGBT topics in curriculum, and in fact, religious school students were more likely to report having LGBT-related information in their textbooks or assigned readings than public school students (Figure 3.19).

We found that private schools were more positive environments for LGBT youth than public schools or religious schools. Not only were private school students less likely to hear anti-LGBT language and less likely to be victimized, but they also had greater access to LGBT-related resources and supports. Whereas LGBT students in religious schools were least likely to have these supports, they did not face the most hostile school climates (students in public schools reported greater frequencies of biased remarks and verbal harassment). Perhaps students in religious schools face stricter codes of conduct and/or harsher discipline for violating school rules, resulting in decreased rates of all types of prohibited behaviors. In addition, unlike most public schools, both religious schools and private schools can select who attends their school and can more easily expel disruptive students compared to public schools. It is perhaps surprising that LGBT students in our sample from religious schools reported more LGBT inclusion in their textbooks and assigned readings than public school students, given that most of these students attended Catholic schools. Students in the survey were asked about any LGBT inclusion in textbooks and readings (regardless of its nature). Therefore, it is possible that these higher rates of textbooks/reading inclusion among religious school students' textbook/readings are due to LGBT topics being presented in a neutral or negative manner.

Figure 3.18 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Gender Expression by School Type
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

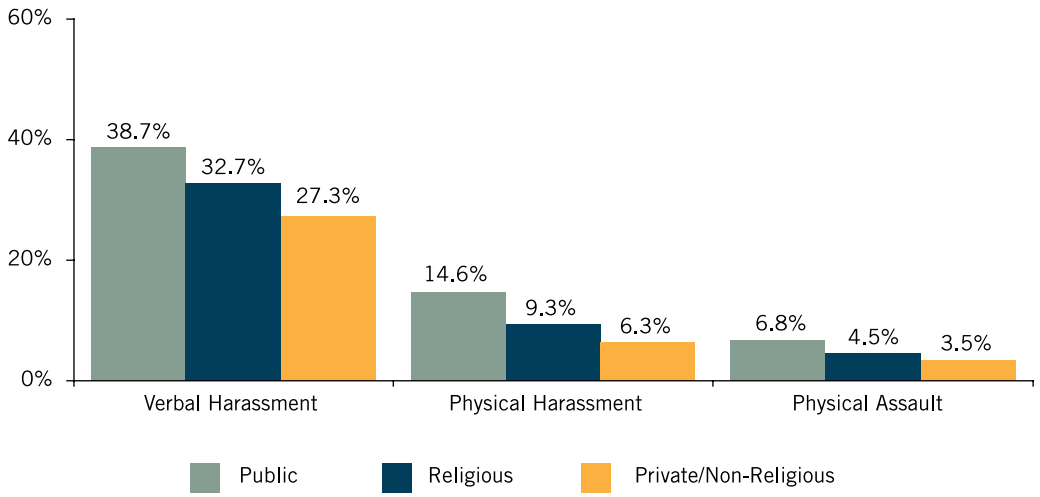
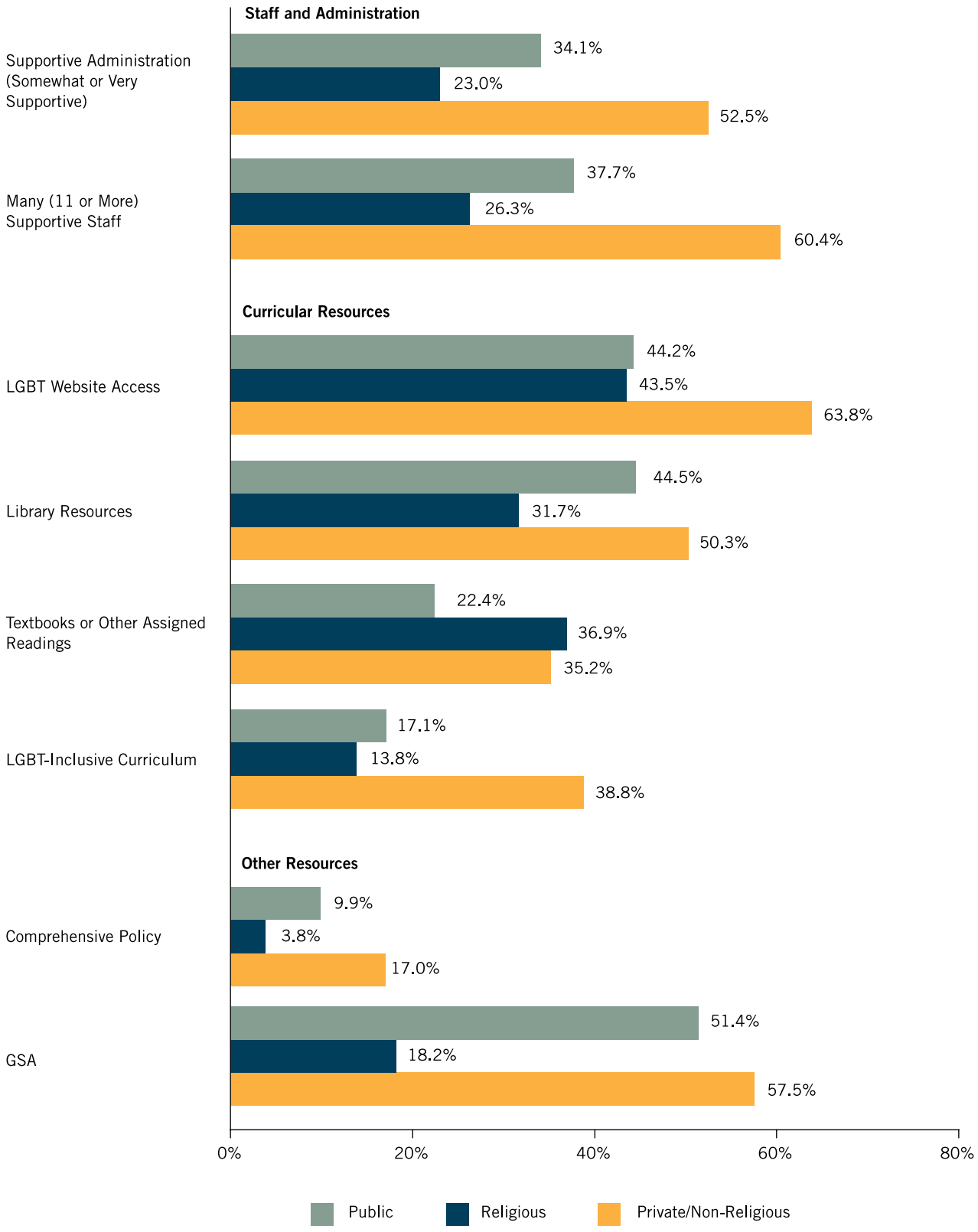


Figure 3.19 Availability of LGBT-Related Resources and Supports by School Type



Comparisons by Region

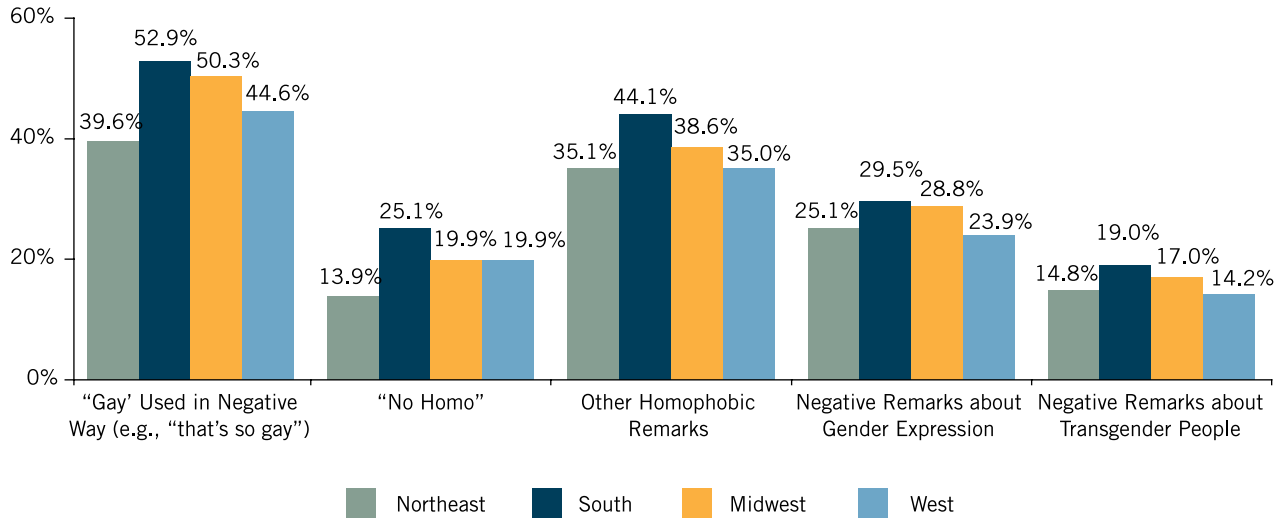
The United States is a large country, rich with geographic diversity. In order to best target education and advocacy efforts, it is helpful to understand the specific array of experiences of LGBT students in schools in these various areas of the country. Therefore, we also examined whether there were differences in students' experiences with biased language, victimization, and access to LGBT-related school resources and supports based on region of the country — Northeast, South, Midwest, or West.[175]

Anti-LGBT Language in School. In general, LGBT students attending schools in the Northeast and the West reported lower frequencies of hearing anti-LGBT remarks than students attending schools in the South and Midwest. Differences were most stark for homophobic expressions such as "that's so gay" and "no homo," perhaps partially demonstrating regional differences in popular vernacular (see Figure 3.20).[176] For example, as shown in Figure 3.20, fewer than half of students in the Northeast and the West reported hearing "gay" used in a negative way frequently (39.6% and 44.6%, respectively), compared to just over half of students in the South and the Midwest (52.9% and 50.3%, respectively).

"Our GSA was formed this year and has attracted a decent crowd. Things change slowly in the Midwest, but I am confident my school is on the right track."

Experiences of Victimization. Overall, LGBT students from schools in the Northeast and the West reported somewhat lower levels of victimization based on sexual orientation and based on gender expression than students in schools in the South and the Midwest, with the largest differences between the Northeast and the South (see Figures 3.21 and 3.22).[177] For example, as shown in Figure 3.21, fewer than half of LGBT students attending schools in the Northeast and West reported higher levels of verbal harassment based on their sexual orientation (43.8% and 47.6% being verbally harassed at least sometimes, respectively), compared to more than half of students in Southern and Midwestern schools (57.3% and 54.0%, respectively).

Figure 3.20 Anti-LGBT Remarks by Region
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Hear Remarks Frequently)



School Resources and Supports. Overall, there were more regional disparities in access to resources and supports than in experiences of hostile school climate. In general, students in the Northeast were most likely to report having LGBT-related resources at school, followed by students in the West.[178] As shown in Figure 3.23, students attending schools in the South were less likely than students in all other regions to have access to each of the LGBT-related resources and supports: a GSA, an inclusive curriculum, Internet access to LGBT-related information, supportive school staff, a supportive administration, and a comprehensive bullying/harassment policy.

Students in the Midwest were also less likely to have certain LGBT-related supports in their schools than students in the Northeast and West, specifically: a GSA, a comprehensive policy, supportive school staff, a supportive administration, and an inclusive curriculum. Although students in the Midwest were also less likely to have access to LGBT-related information through the Internet using school computers compared to students in the Northeast, they were not different from students in the West in this regard.

Although the differences were not as vast, students in the Northeast were also more likely than students in the West to have most LGBT-related

Figure 3.21 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Sexual Orientation by Region
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

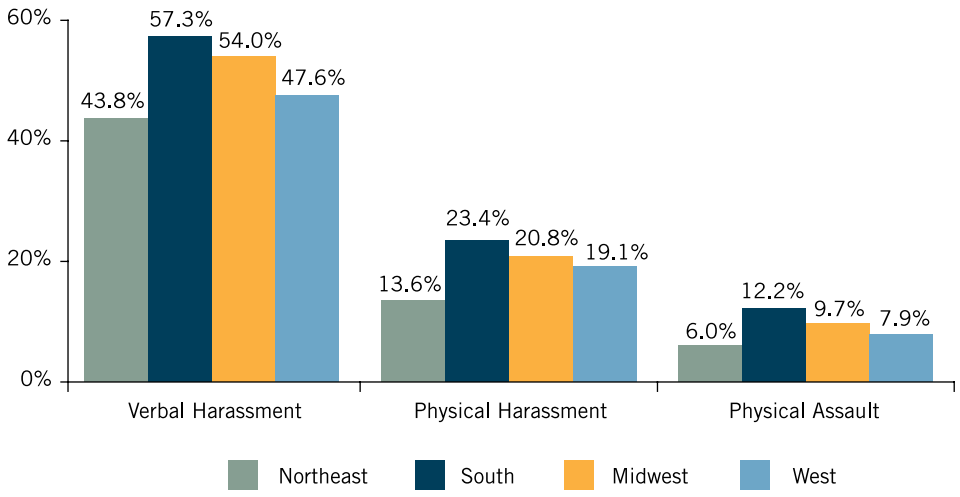


Figure 3.22 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Gender Expression by Region
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

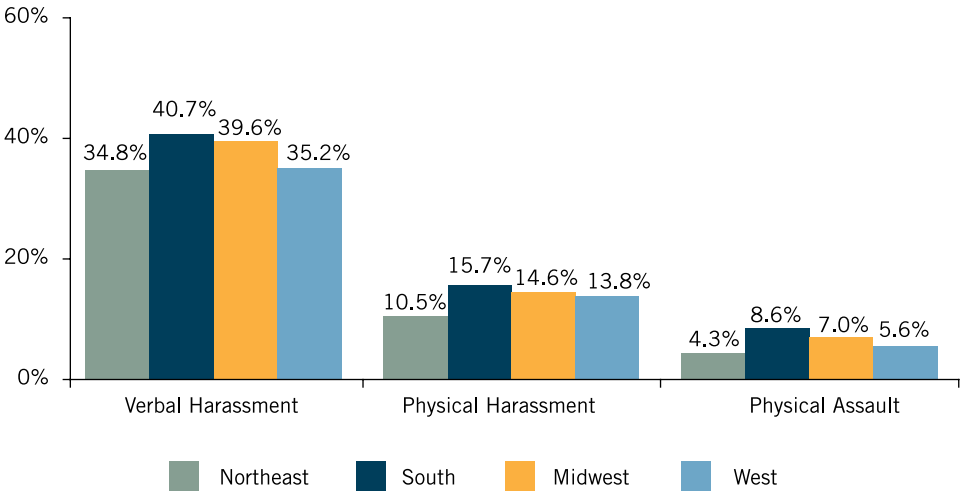
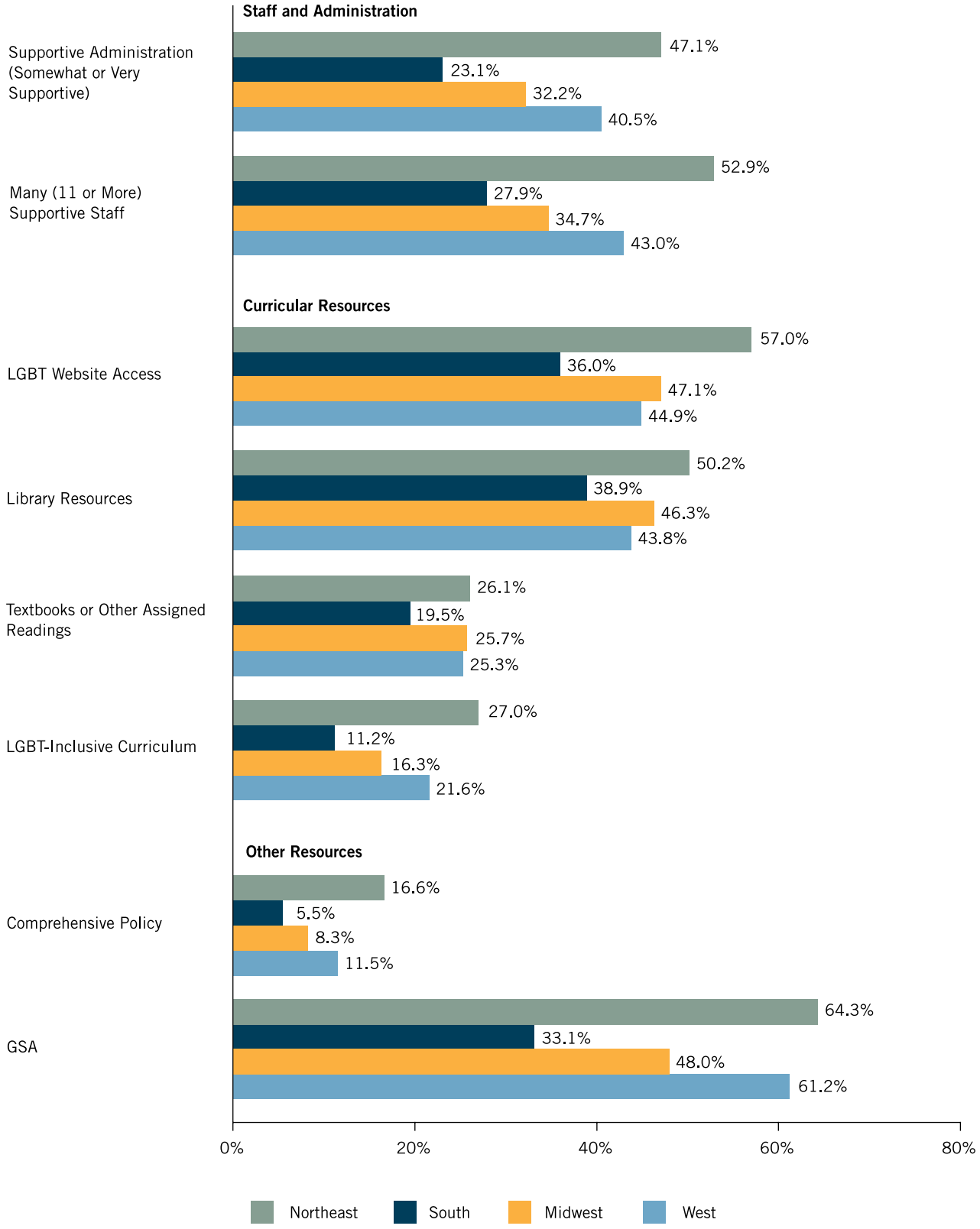


Figure 3.23 Availability of LGBT-Related Resources and Supports by Region



resources. However, students in these two regions did not differ in the likelihood of having a GSA.

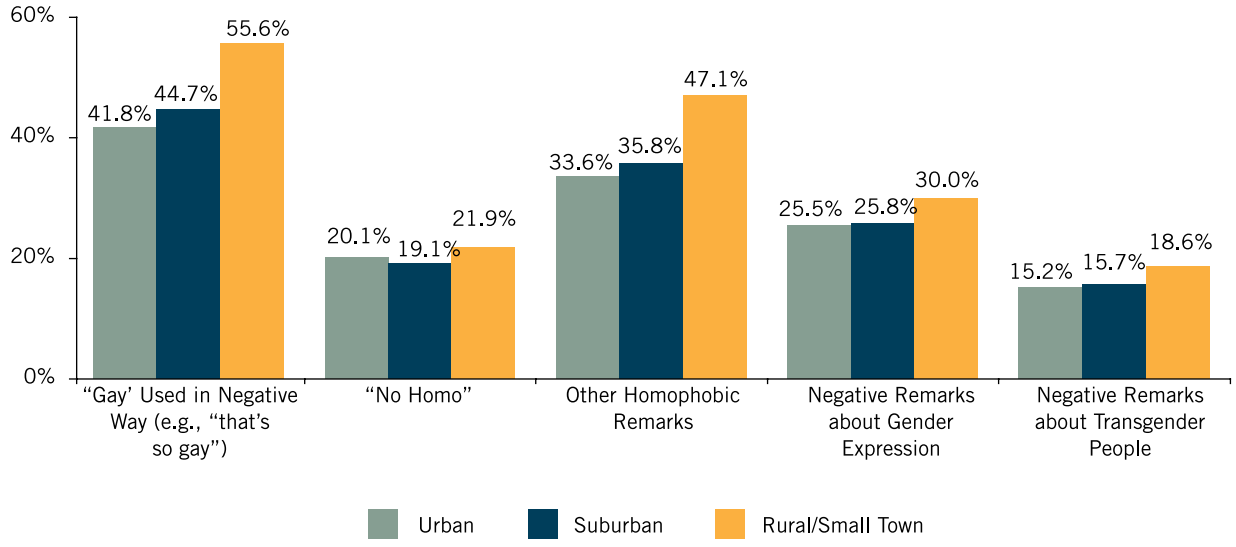
Overall, LGBT students' school experiences differed substantially with respect to geographic region. Compared to students in the Northeast and the West, students in the South and Midwest had more negative school climates, including more frequent anti-LGBT language and higher levels of victimization. Southern and Midwestern students also had less access to LGBT-related resources and supports, particularly GSAs and supportive school staff. Although schools in all regions must continue to improve school climate for LGBT students, these regional findings highlight that much more needs to be done in the South and Midwest to ensure that LGBT students are safe at school, and education leaders and safe school advocates must focus efforts on schools in these regions. Further research should examine the type and effectiveness of strategies used to implement LGBT-supportive school resources in the South and the Midwest. Advocates should strive to identify the most effective means for ensuring LGBT students in all areas of the country have access to these and other potentially beneficial resources and supports.

Comparisons by School Locale

Previous research has shown that attitudes about LGBT people can vary greatly by the type of community — whether urban, suburban, small town, or rural — with more negative attitudes being in rural and small town areas.[179] On the other hand, research on school violence among the general population of students indicates that students in schools in urban areas may face higher levels of violence.[180] Yet there is some evidence that LGBT students specifically who go to urban schools may feel safer and more accepted.[181] Thus, it was important for us to examine whether there were differences in the NSCS among the students based on the type of community in which their schools were located — urban, suburban, or rural/small town areas. Specifically, we examined the prevalence of anti-LGBT language and victimization as well as the availability of LGBT-related school resources and supports.

Anti-LGBT Language in School. There were significant differences across locales in students' reports of hearing homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression.[182] As shown in Figure 3.24, students in rural/small town schools reported the highest frequency of hearing all types of anti-LGBT remarks. Students in urban schools were also less likely than students in suburban schools to hear the word "gay" used in a negative way as well as other homophobic remarks. There were, however, no significant differences between LGBT students in urban and suburban schools in the frequency of hearing the phrase "no homo," negative remarks about gender expression, or negative remarks about transgender people.

Figure 3.24 Anti-LGBT Remarks by School Locale
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Hear Remarks Frequently)



Experiences of Victimization. As shown in Figures 3.25 and 3.26, LGBT students in rural/small town schools experienced higher levels of victimization based on sexual orientation and based on gender expression than students in other types of communities.[183] Students in urban schools and suburban schools did not differ in their levels of reported victimization.

School Resources and Supports. Overall, as shown in Figure 3.27, LGBT students in rural/small town schools were least likely to have LGBT-related resources or supports, with the greatest disparities being in availability of GSAs, supportive staff, and supportive administrations.[184] There were also differences in the presence of comprehensive policies and most curricular resources (excluding LGBT-related information in the school library), although only a minority of students reported having these resources regardless of locale. Overall, students in urban schools and suburban schools did not differ in their access to school resources and supports.

Our findings show that for LGBT students, schools in rural areas and small towns were the

Figure 3.25 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Sexual Orientation by School Locale
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

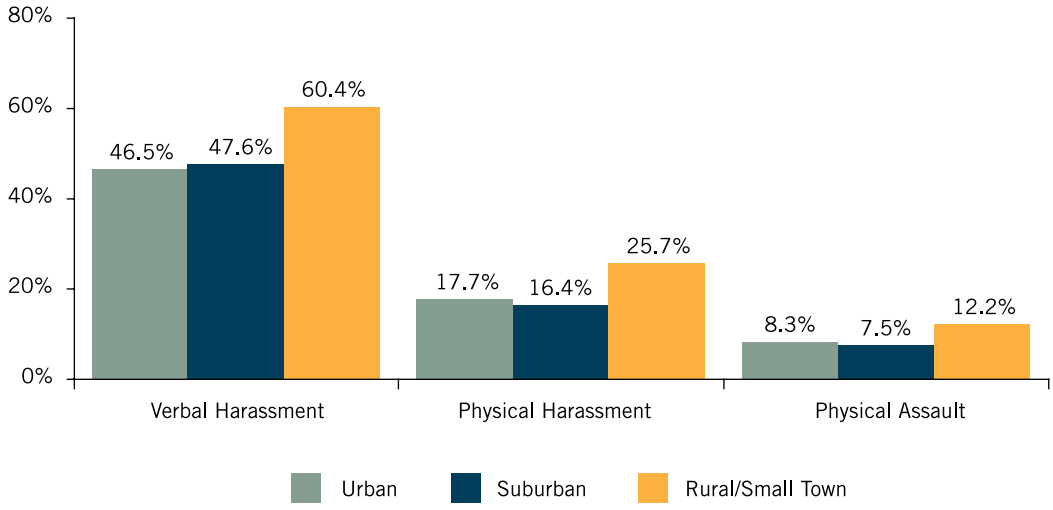


Figure 3.26 Experiences of Harassment and Assault Based on Gender Expression by School Locale
(Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Sometimes, Often, or Frequently)

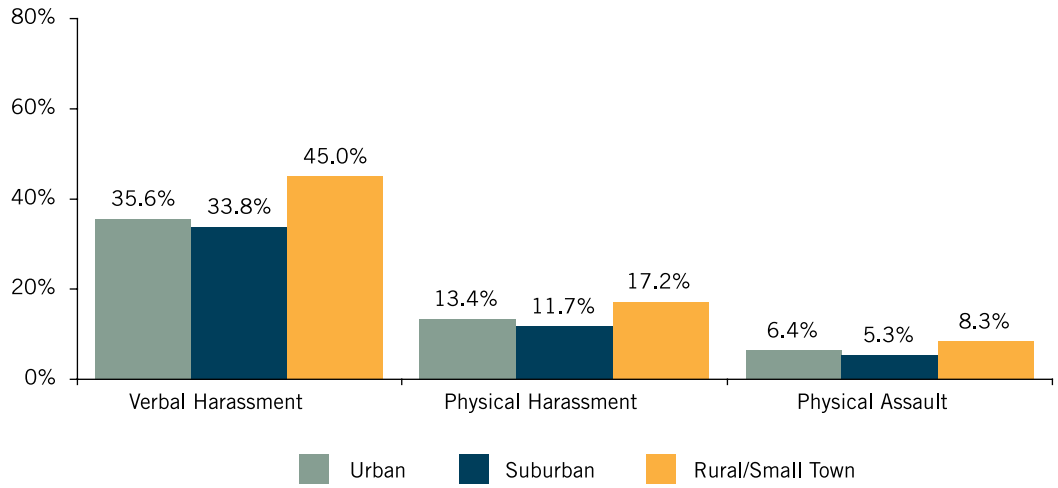
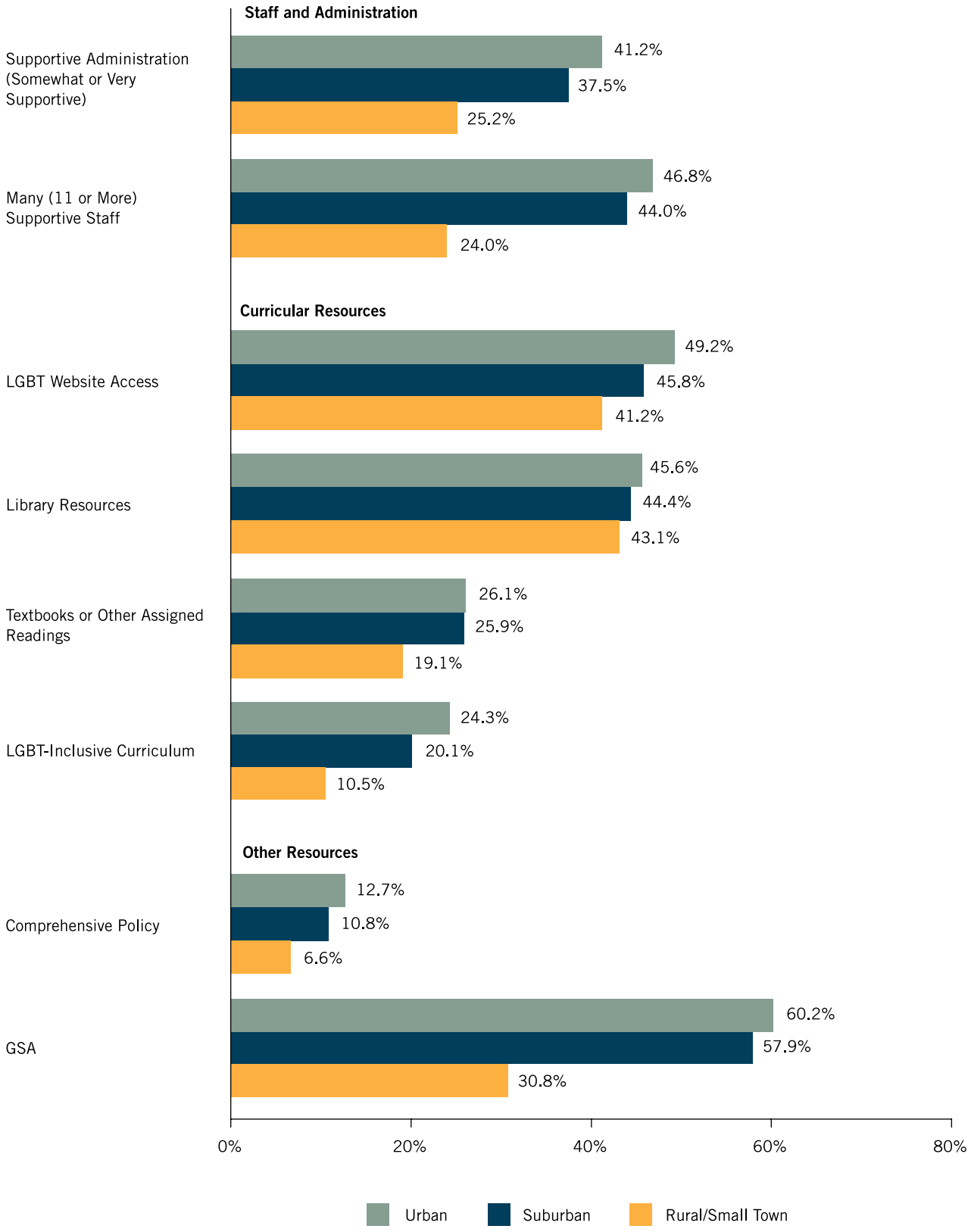


Figure 3.27 Availability of LGBT-Related Resources and Supports by School Locale



most unsafe. LGBT students in rural/small town schools experienced the highest levels of anti-LGBT language and victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression and were least likely to have LGBT-related resources and supports in school. Given the positive impact of these resources and supports (see section *Utility of School-Based Resources and Supports*), specific efforts should be made to increase these resources in rural/small town schools. It is important to note that the experiences of LGBT students appear to differ from the general population of students who typically face more unsafe schools in urban areas. Thus, national efforts regarding bullying prevention must not only be inclusive of the experiences of LGBT students but must also be cognizant of how the incidence of victimization and of available student supports varies among LGBT students, such as by locale or region. Safe school advocates and education leaders may also need to develop different strategies and programmatic interventions for LGBT students in rural areas, and further research is be needed to better understand the obstacles to implementing resources for LGBT students in rural areas.

PART FOUR: INDICATORS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE OVER TIME: BIASED LANGUAGE, VICTIMIZATION, AND RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Key Findings

- Since 2001, there has been a steady decrease in students' frequency of hearing homophobic remarks at school, and more recently, there has been a decline in the frequency of hearing negative remarks about someone's gender expression.
- Students' frequency of experiencing harassment and assault based on sexual orientation and gender expression was significantly lower in 2013 than in previous years.
- There has been an increase over time in the presence of several LGBT-related resources and supports in school, specifically:
    - Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) or other student clubs that address LGBT issues in education;
    - School staff who are supportive of LGBT students;
    - Access to LGBT-related Internet resources through school computers;
    - Positive representations of LGBT people, history, and events in the curriculum; and
    - Comprehensive school anti-bullying/harassment policies that include specific protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Through our biennial National School Climate Survey (NSCS) we have continually examined the school climate for LGBT students since 1999. As the only study that has regularly assessed LGBT student experiences, it is vital that we use our data to examine changes over time in the education landscape for this population. In this section, we examine whether there have been changes from 2001 to the 2013 survey,[185] on both indicators of a hostile school climate, such as hearing homophobic remarks and experiences of harassment and assault, and on the availability of positive resources for LGBT students in their schools, such as supportive teachers, the availability of Gay-Straight Alliances, and inclusive curricular resources.

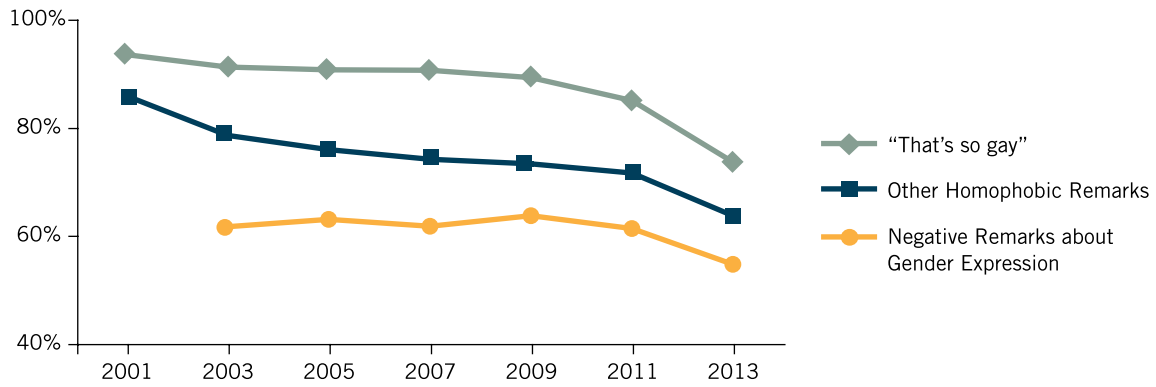
Anti-LGBT Remarks Over Time

Language perpetually evolves, and so is the case in use of homophobic remarks since we began conducting the NSCS. To keep current with changes in language usage, we have modified how we ask LGBT students about anti-LGBT remarks. In 2001, we assessed only the frequency of hearing homophobic remarks, either remarks like "fag" or "dyke" but also expressions using "gay" to mean something bad or valueless. In 2003, we began asking questions about hearing negative remarks about gender expression, such as someone acting not "feminine enough" or "masculine enough." In 2009, we began assessing the expression "no homo," and in 2013 we asked about hearing negative remarks about transgender people.[186]

Our results indicate a general trend that homophobic remarks are on the decline.[187] Students in 2013 reported a marked decreased in the incidence of these remarks than all prior years, continuing the trend we saw in 2011.[188] For example, the percentage of students hearing these remarks frequently or often has dropped from over 80% in 2001 to just above 60% in 2013 (see Figure 4.1). Use of expressions such as "that's so gay" has remained the most common form of bias language heard by LGBT students in school. However, as also shown in Figure 4.1, there has been a significant, consistent decline in the frequency of this language since 2001.[189] In the most recent years, there had been very few differences in the incidence of hearing negative remarks about gender expression over time; however, in 2013, there was a significant decrease from 2011 and the lowest incidence of these remarks since 2007.[190]

Figure 4.2 illustrates the preponderance of students who reportedly use anti-LGBT language in school, as reported by LGBT students in our survey. The number of students who reported that homophobic remarks were used pervasively by the student body had been on a small decline since the 2001 survey but declined sharply in 2013.[191] For example, less than 30% of students said that homophobic remarks were made by most or all of the students in their school in 2013 compared to about 40% in 2011 and nearly 50% in 2001. As also shown in Figure 4.2, the preponderance of students reportedly making negative remarks about gender expression

Figure 4.1 Anti-LGBT Language Heard by LGBT Students Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report Hearing Remarks Often or Frequently
(Based on Estimated Marginal Means)



at school has remained low and relatively stable, relative to homophobic remarks; nevertheless, the number of students making those remarks was slightly lower in 2013 than all prior years.[192]

As shown in Figure 4.3, since we began conducting the NSCS, the majority of students have reported that they have heard anti-LGBT remarks from faculty or staff in their school. However, in 2013, the percent of students reporting homophobic remarks from staff has fallen to 50% — lower than all previous years.[193] With regard to hearing negative remarks about gender expression from school staff, there has also been a small, downward trend in frequency since we first started asking about it in 2003 (see also Figure 4.3).

In our 2001 survey, we began asking students how frequently people in their school intervened when hearing homophobic remarks. Figure 4.4 shows the relatively stable level of intervention by both school staff and by students over time with regard to homophobic remarks.[194] However, in 2013, we saw a slight increase in staff intervention in homophobic remarks from previous years. Regarding negative remarks about gender expression, we had seen a slight downward trend in levels of intervention by both staff and students (see Figure 4.5).[195] In general, it appears that intervention in anti-LGBT remarks by members of the school community is not improving, particularly regarding remarks related to gender expression, where staff and students may be intervening even less.

Figure 4.2 Number of Students Using Anti-LGBT Language Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report that "Most of the Students" at their School Make These Remarks
(Based on Estimated Marginal Means)

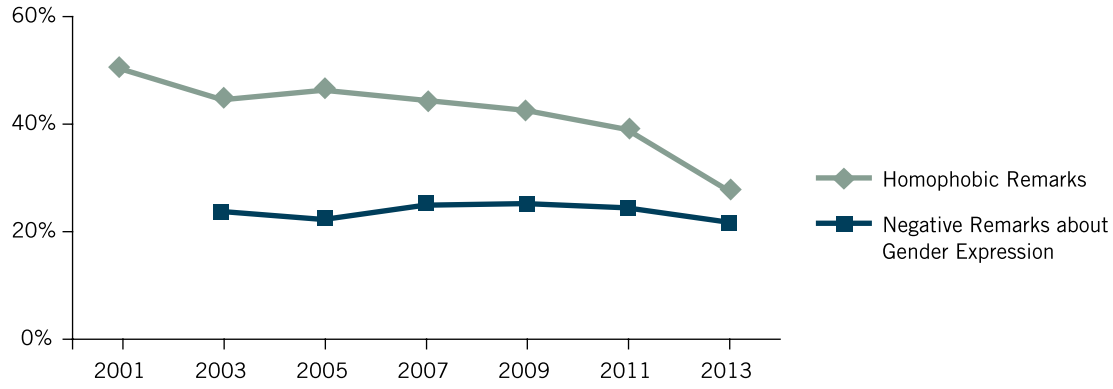


Figure 4.3 Anti-LGBT Language Used By School Staff Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report Ever Hearing Remarks from School Staff
(Based on Estimated Marginal Means)

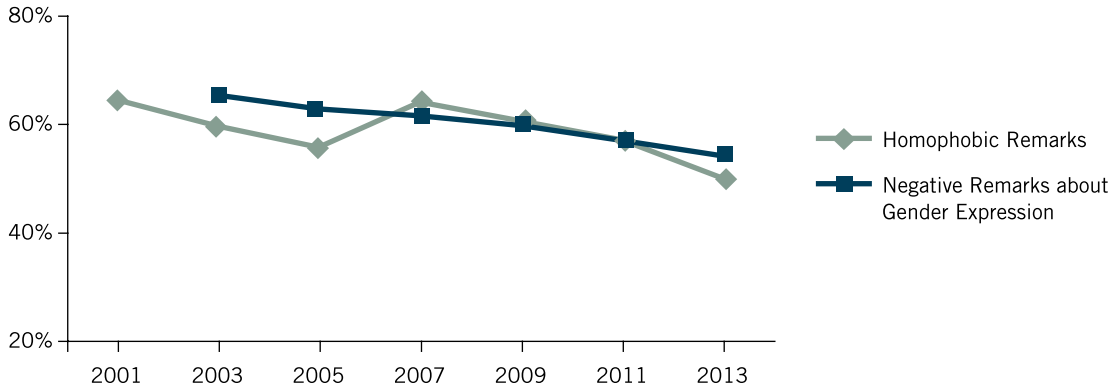


Figure 4.4 Intervention in Homophobic Remarks Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report that Intervention Occurs Most of the Time or Always
(Based on Estimated Marginal Means)

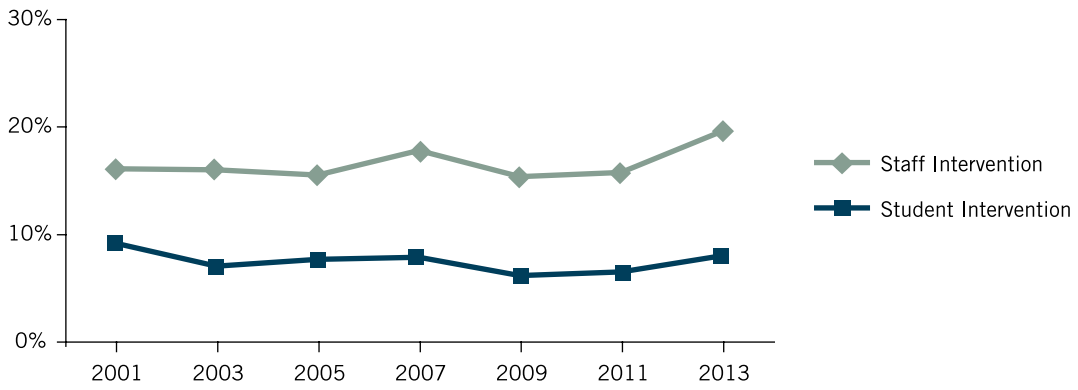
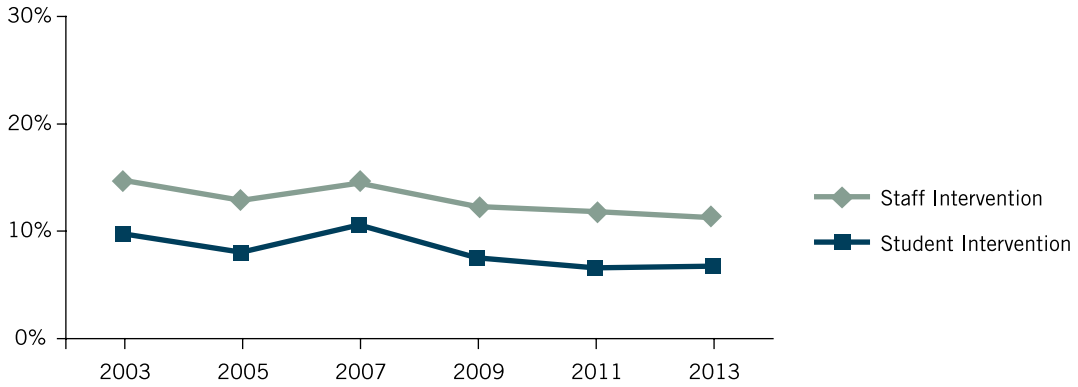


Figure 4.5 Intervention in Negative Remarks about Gender Expression Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report that Intervention Occurs Most of the Time or Always
(Based on Estimated Marginal Means)



Experiences of Harassment and Assault Over Time

To gain some understanding of whether there have been changes in school climate for LGBT students in secondary schools, we examined the incidence of reported harassment and assault since 2001. In 2011, we saw a significant decline in victimization based on sexual orientation after few changes among prior years, and in 2013, we saw this decline continue. As shown in Figure 4.6, the percentages across years of LGBT students who reported verbal harassment regarding their sexual orientation frequently or often were less than 20%.[196] Although the degree of change was not as pronounced for physical harassment, it was also significantly lower in 2013 than all prior years. Physical assault based on sexual orientation was its lowest since 2007. As shown in Figure 4.7, there was the same pattern of differences regarding harassment and assault based on gender expression — verbal and physical harassment were lower in 2013 than all prior years and physical assault was also its lowest since 2007.[197]

“I firmly believe that it does not just ‘get better.’ I am an example of someone who went out of their comfort zone to change their school environment for future LGBT students. I am graduating my high school this year and leaving it a very different place.”

Figure 4.6 Frequency of Harassment and Assault Based on Sexual Orientation Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Often or Frequently in the Past School Year
(Based on Estimated Marginal Means)

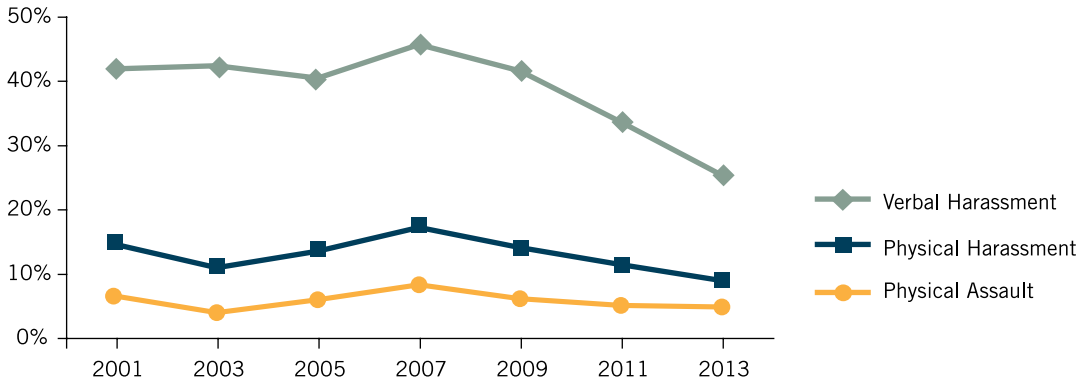
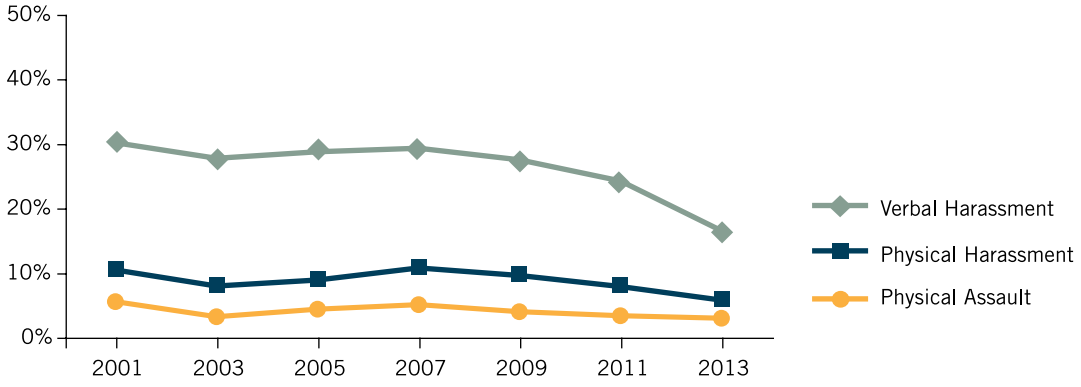


Figure 4.7 Frequency of Harassment and Assault Based on Gender Expression Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Experienced Event Often or Frequently in the Past School Year
(Based on Estimated Marginal Means)



LGBT-Related Resources Over Time

In 2001, we began asking LGBT students in the NSCS about the availability of LGBT-related resources in school, such as Gay-Straight Alliances and curricular resources. Since 2001, there have continued to be significant increases in many LGBT-related resources.

Supportive Student Clubs. In 2013, we continued to see small increases from previous years in the percentage of students having supportive student clubs, such as Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) at school.[198] As shown in Figure 4.8, the percentage of LGBT students reporting that they have a GSA in their school was statistically higher than all previous years.

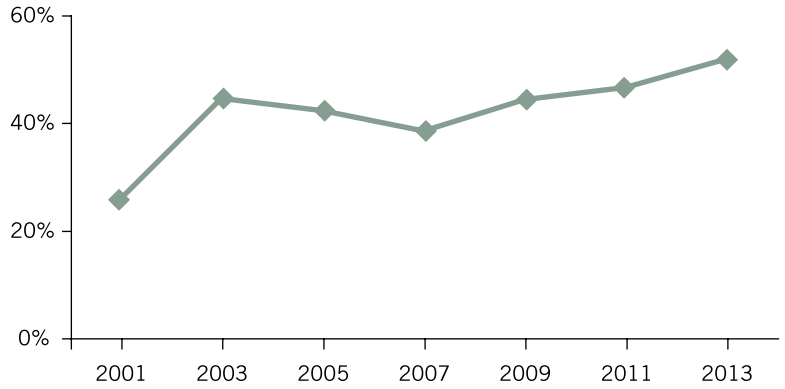
Supportive School Personnel. We also found an increase from prior years in the number of teachers or other school staff who were supportive of LGBT students. Figure 4.9 shows the percentages of students reporting any supportive staff (from 2001 to 2013) and the percentages of students reporting a high number of supportive staff (from 2003 to 2013).[199] Both indicators were significantly higher in 2013, and among the two, we saw a greater increase in the percentage of students reporting a high number of supportive staff.

Inclusive Curricular Resources. There were several substantial changes in the availability of LGBT-related curricular resources in 2013 from prior years. As shown in Figure 4.10, the percentage of students who reported LGBT-inclusive curricular resources increased in 2013 from 2011 with the exception of LGBT-related library resources. The most notable increase was with access to LGBT-related Internet resources through their school computers.[200]

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policies. In all years, as shown in Figure 4.11, the majority of LGBT students reported that their schools had some type of anti-bullying/harassment policy; however, only a minority of students reported that the policy enumerated sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression. There was a sizeable increase from 2009 to 2011, and a more moderate, but significant increase from 2011 to 2013 with regard to any type of anti-bullying/harassment policy. There have been few changes in the percentage of students reporting enumerated policies, but there was a small but significant increase in the percentage of students reporting that their school had a partially enumerated policy and in the percentage reporting a comprehensive policy. In fact, in 2013, the percentage of students reporting a comprehensive policy was higher than all prior years.[201]

Regarding changes in school resources overall, in 2013, we continued to see increases in the availability of most of the LGBT-related resources — even in some of the supports that were already quite common (e.g., supportive school staff and GSAs). However, after seeing increases in library resources from 2001 to 2009, we have seen little change since that time. It is possible that these changes are related to school expenditures for library materials — schools that did not previously have LGBT-related materials in their libraries may not have had resources to include them. It is also possible that for some libraries, inclusion of

Figure 4.8 Availability of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report Having a GSA at School (Accounting for Covariates)



LGBT materials was not a priority relative to other informational needs. In the past, the American Library Association (ALA) has been an advocate against censorship and has partnered with GLSEN in providing resources educating school librarians on LGBT student issues. These findings suggest that more attention should be paid to library materials in the future.

It is particularly noteworthy that the inclusion of LGBT-related content in textbooks increased in 2013 given that it had changed very little since our 2001 survey. In 2011, California's Fair, Inclusive, and Respectful (FAIR) Education Act was implemented to ensure that LGBT contributions are included in California social science education and also prohibits the adoption of textbooks and other instructional materials that discriminate against LGBT people. As California is a large market for the textbook industry, it is possible that implementing the FAIR Education Act has resulted in more students seeing LGBT-related content in their textbooks across the country.

Considering all of the differences across time — remarks, victimization, and LGBT-related supports — we see a more recent trend in the data in some significant decreases in negative indicators of school climate (e.g., hearing anti-LGBT remarks and experiences of victimization), and a steady, longer trend in increases in many of the LGBT-related resources and supports in school. Given that we know increased resources are related to a decrease in negative school climate (see *Utility of School-Based Resources and Supports* in this report), our findings in 2013 indicate that it can take a substantial amount of time for school resources (e.g., creating a GSA or having more teachers in one's school who are supportive of LGBT students) to have school-level effects on school culture in general, and biased language and victimization specifically.

Our findings also suggest that institutionally-driven supports, such as implementing a comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policy or including LGBT content in the curriculum, may be slower to change than individually-driven supports (e.g., student clubs or supportive educators). Although we saw increases in most of the curricular resources in our 2013 survey, those changes have been slower across the years. Further, we found that the growth in having any type of policy was greater than the growth in having a comprehensive or even a partially enumerated policy.

Figure 4.9 Availability of Supportive School Staff Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report Having Supportive Teachers and Other School Staff (Accounting for Covariates)

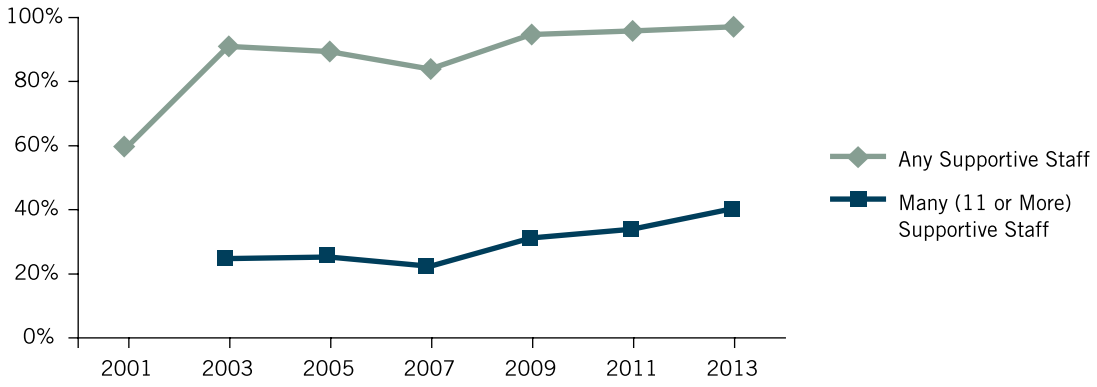


Figure 4.10 Availability of Curricular Resources Over TIme
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report Having Resources in School
(Accounting for Covariates)

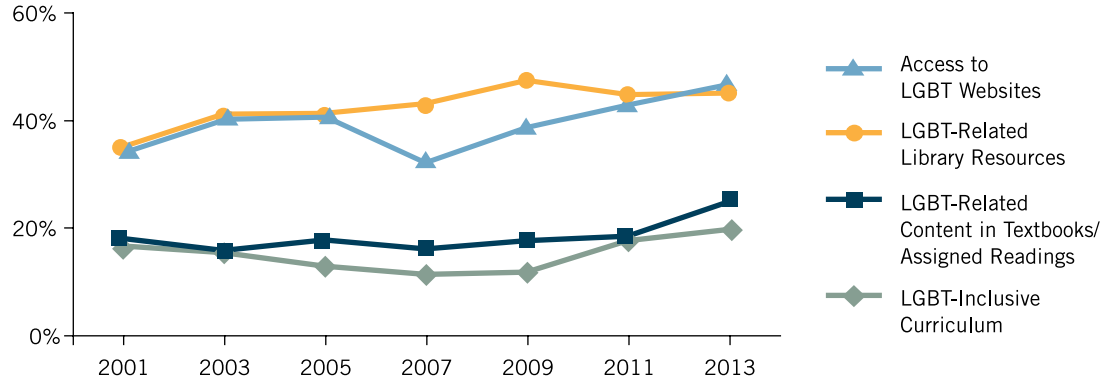
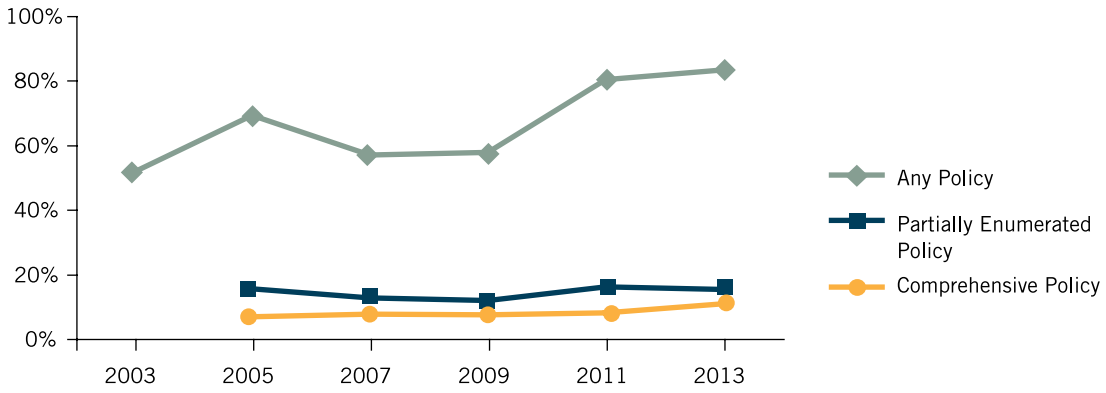
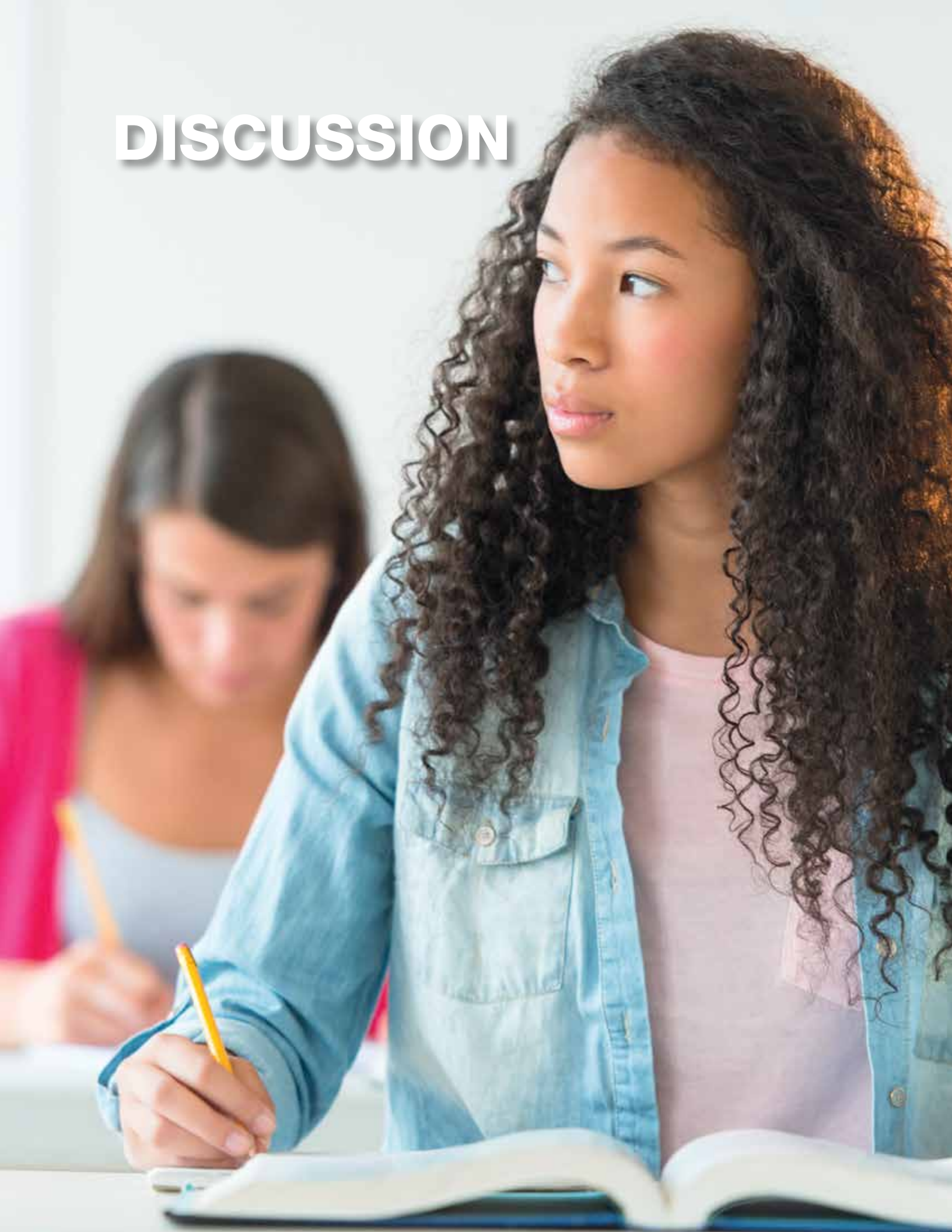


Figure 4.11 Prevalence of School Bullying, Harassment, and Assault Policies Over Time
Percentage of LGBT Students who Report Having Specific Types of Policies
(Accounting for Covariates)



DISCUSSION



Limitations

The methods used for our survey resulted in a nationally representative sample of LGBT students. However, it is important to note that our sample is representative only of youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (or another non-heterosexual sexual orientation and/or non-cisgender gender identity) and have some connection to the LGBT community (either through their local youth organization or through the Internet, including social media). As discussed in the *Methods and Sample* section, in addition to announcing the survey through LGBT community groups, LGBT youth-oriented social media, and youth advocacy organizations, we conducted targeted advertising on the social networking site Facebook in order to broaden our reach and obtain a more representative sample. Advertising on Facebook allowed LGBT students who did not necessarily have any formal connection to the LGBT community to participate in the survey and resulted in a higher level of participation from previously hard-to-reach populations than in years prior to 2007, when we did not utilize this method. However, the social networking advertisements for the survey were sent only to youth who gave some indication that they were LGBT on their Facebook profile.[202] LGBT youth who were not comfortable identifying as LGBT in this manner would not have received the advertisement about the survey and may be somewhat underrepresented in the survey sample. Thus, LGBT youth who are perhaps the most isolated — those without a formal connection to the LGBT community and access to online resources and supports and who are not comfortable identifying as LGBT in their Facebook profile — may be underrepresented in the survey sample.

We also cannot make determinations from our data about the experiences of youth who might be engaging in same-sex sexual activity or experiencing same-sex attractions but who do not identify themselves as LGB. These youth may be more isolated, unaware of supports available to them, or, even if aware, uncomfortable using such supports. Similarly, youth whose gender identity is not the same as their sex assigned at birth, but who do not identify as transgender, may also be more isolated and without the same access to resources as the youth in our survey. Although we do allow for all non-heterosexual and non-cisgender students to remain in our survey sample, including those who may be questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity, the survey was primarily advertised as being for LGBT students. Therefore, those not identifying as LGBT might be less likely to participate in the survey. Although there are plans for government surveys to begin assessing the experiences of LGB students, such as the addition of sexual orientation items to the national version of the CDC's 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), there are no current plans to assess transgender identity in government youth surveys.[203] Therefore, there remains a need for population-based survey data on LGBT youth.

Another possible limitation to the survey is related to the sample's racial/ethnic composition — the percentage of youth of color was lower than the general population of secondary school students. This discrepancy may be related to different methods for measuring race/ethnicity, as we allow for students in our survey to select multiple options for their race/ethnicity, and code students who selected two or more racial categories as being multiracial.[204] In contrast, most national youth surveys restrict students to selecting only one racial category and do not provide a multiracial response option.[205] When forced to select one response, students with both White and another racial background may be more likely to select a non-White identity, particularly when "multiracial" is not an option.[206] This may result in a higher percentage of students of color from specific racial groups being identified in other surveys and a higher percentage of students being identified as multiracial in our survey (e.g., a student who is African American/Black and White might select African American/Black in a survey where they only can select one option, whereas in our survey that student might select both racial identities and then become coded as multiracial). This difference in method may account for some of the discrepancy regarding percentages of specific racial groups (e.g., African American/Black, Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander) between our sample and the general population of secondary school students. Although it is possible that LGBT youth of color were somewhat underrepresented in our sample, because there are no national statistics on the demographic breakdown of LGBT-identified youth, we cannot know how our sample compares to other population-based studies. Nevertheless, our participant outreach methods have resulted in increased representation of youth of color over the years.

Furthermore, our survey was available only in both English and Spanish. Therefore, LGBT students who are not proficient in either of those languages, such as some recent immigrants, might be limited in their ability to participate. Thus, these students might be underrepresented in our survey sample.

It is also important to note that our survey only reflects the experiences of LGBT students who were in school during the 2012–2013 school year. Although our sample does allow for students who had left school at some point during the 2012-2013 school year to participate, it still does not reflect the experiences of LGBT youth who may have already dropped out in prior school years. The experiences of these youth may likely differ from those students who remained in school, particularly with regard to hostile school climate, access to supportive resources, severity of school discipline, juvenile/criminal justice involvement, and homelessness.

Lastly, the data from our survey are cross-sectional (i.e., the data were collected at one point in time), which means that we cannot determine causality. For example, although we can say that there was a relationship between the number of supportive staff and students' academic achievement, we cannot say that one predicts the other.

While considering these limitations, our attempts at diverse recruitment of a hard-to-reach population have yielded a sample of LGBT students that we believe most likely closely reflects the population of LGBT middle and high school students in the U.S.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The 2013 National School Climate Survey, as in our previous surveys, shows that schools are often unsafe learning environments for LGBT students. Hearing biased or derogatory language at school, especially homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression, was a common occurrence. However, teachers and other school authorities did not often intervene when homophobic or negative remarks about gender expression were made in their presence, and students' use of such language remained largely unchallenged. More than two thirds of the students in our survey reported feeling unsafe at school because of at least one personal characteristic, with sexual orientation and gender expression being the most commonly reported characteristics. Students also frequently reported avoiding spaces in their schools that they perceived as being unsafe, especially bathrooms, locker rooms, and P.E. classes. Nearly three quarters of LGBT students reported that they had been verbally harassed at school based on their sexual orientation, and more than half had been harassed based on their gender expression. In addition, many students reported experiencing incidents of physical harassment and assault related to their sexual orientation or gender expression, as well as incidents of sexual harassment, deliberate property damage, and cyberbullying at school. Transgender and gender nonconforming students were particularly likely to have felt unsafe at school and to have been harassed due to their sexual orientation and gender expression.

In addition to anti-LGBT behavior by peers, be it biased language in the hallways or direct personal victimization, the majority of LGBT students also faced discriminatory school practices and policies. Schools prohibited LGBT students from expressing themselves through their clothing or their relationships, restricted LGBT content in the curriculum, limited LGBT inclusion in extracurricular activities, and promoted policies that negatively affected transgender students in particular, such as preventing use of a preferred name or pronoun.

Results from our survey also demonstrate the serious consequences that anti-LGBT victimization and discrimination can have on LGBT students' academic success and their general well-being. LGBT students who experienced frequent harassment and assault based on their sexual orientation or gender expression reported missing more days of school and having lower GPAs and lower educational aspirations than students who were harassed less often. In addition, students who experienced higher levels of harassment and assault had lower levels of school belonging and poorer psychological well-being. LGBT students who reported experiencing anti-LGBT discrimination at school, such as differential treatment for same-sex couples versus heterosexual couples, had worse educational outcomes and poorer well-being than other students.

"I feel very fortunate to go to a school that is so encouraging to diversity. Being anti-gay is very unpopular. All my friends that I've come out to have been really great. Teachers have encouraged me to talk at a faculty meeting, a middle school assembly, and in a 9th grade human development class."

Although our results suggest that school climate remains dire for many LGBT students, they also highlight the important role that institutional supports can play in making schools safer for these students. Steps that schools take to improve school climate are also an investment in better educational outcomes and healthy youth development. For instance, supportive educators positively influenced students' academic performance, educational aspirations, and feelings of safety. Students attending schools that had a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or a similar student club reported hearing fewer homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression, were less likely to feel unsafe and miss school

for safety reasons, and reported a greater sense of belonging to their school community. Students who reported that their classroom curriculum included positive representations of LGBT issues were much less likely to miss school, had a greater sense of school belonging, and reported hearing fewer homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression. Unfortunately, these resources and supports were often not available to LGBT students. Although a majority of students did report having at least one supportive teacher or other staff person in school, only half had a GSA in their school, and less than half had LGBT-related materials in the school library or could access LGBT-related resources via school computers. Other resources, such as inclusive curricula and LGBT-inclusive textbooks and readings, were even less common. Furthermore, students from certain types of schools, such as middle schools or religious-affiliated private schools; from certain locales, such as small towns or rural areas; and from certain regions, such as the South and the Midwest, were less likely than other students to report having supportive resources in their schools. These findings clearly indicate the importance of advocating for the inclusion of these resources in schools to ensure positive learning environments for LGBT students in all schools—environments in which students can receive a high quality education, graduate, and continue on to further education.

Findings from the 2013 survey indicate that comprehensive school harassment/assault policies can result in concrete improvements in school climate for LGBT students. Students in schools with comprehensive harassment/assault policies that included protections for sexual orientation and gender identity/expression reported a lower incidence of both homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression, as well as a greater frequency of school staff intervention when homophobic remarks were made. Furthermore, students with a comprehensive policy were more likely to report incidents of harassment and assault to school personnel. Unfortunately, students attending schools with comprehensive policies remained in the minority. Although a majority of students said that their school had some type of harassment/assault policy, few said that it was a comprehensive policy that explicitly stated protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

We have seen small, but steady increases in the availability of certain LGBT-related resources since our last report– specifically, GSAs, school staff supportive of LGBT students, LGBT-inclusive curricular resources, and comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policies. Rates of students hearing homophobic epithets and negative remarks about gender expression have declined steadily as has the pervasiveness of these remarks in the school environment. In 2013, the downward trend in experiences of harassment due to sexual orientation and gender expression continued. This may result, in part, from the continued growth of resources over time. Nevertheless, it is still the minority of students who have these resources available to them, with the exception of having any supportive school staff person. In addition, although more and more students report that their schools have anti-bullying/harassment policies, a consistent minority of policies includes protections based sexual orientation and gender identity/expression specifically. The results of the National School Climate show that great strides have been made in providing LGBT students with school supports, yet also show that more work is needed to create safer and more affirming learning environments for LGBT students.

Recommendations

It is clear that there is an urgent need for action to create safer and more inclusive schools for LGBT students. There are steps that concerned stakeholders can take to remedy the situation. Results from the 2013 National School Climate Survey demonstrate the ways in which the presence of supportive educators, comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policies, and other school-based resources and supports can positively affect LGBT students' school experiences. Therefore, we recommend the following measures:

- Support student clubs, such as Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), that provide support for LGBT students and address LGBT issues in education;
- Provide training for school staff to improve rates of intervention and increase the number of supportive teachers and other staff available to students;
- Increase student access to appropriate and accurate information regarding LGBT people,

history, and events through inclusive curricula and library and Internet resources;

- Ensure that school policies and practices, such as those related to dress codes and school dances, do not discriminate against LGBT students; and

- Adopt and implement comprehensive school and district anti-bullying/harassment policies that specifically enumerate sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression as protected categories alongside others such as race, religion, and disability, with clear and effective systems for reporting and addressing incidents that students experience.

Taken together, such measures can move us towards a future in which all students have the opportunity to learn and succeed in school, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Notes

1 Lhamon, C. E. (2014). Questions and answers on Title IX and sexual violence. Washington, D.C. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf.

2 For more details about GLSEN's advocacy regarding Title IX guidance in relationship to protections for transgender students, see http://glsen.org/article/glsen-calls-dept-ed-further-title-ix-guidance.

3 Slater, H. (2013) Department of Education commits to the studying the bullying on LGBT students. Think Progress, June 28, http://thinkprogress.org/lgbt/2013/06/28/2232391/lgbt-bullying-data-collection.

4 Himmelstein, K. E., & Brückner, H. (2011). Criminal-justice and school sanctions against nonheterosexual youth: A national longitudinal study. *Pediatrics, 127*(1), 49–57.

Irvine, A. (2010). 'We've had three of them': Addressing the invisibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and gender nonconforming youths in the juvenile justice system. *Columbia Journal of Gender & Law, 19*, 675–701.

5 Mitchum, P. & Moodie-Mills, A. C. (2014). *Beyond bullying: How hostile school climate perpetuates the school-to-prison pipeline for LGBT youth*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

6 Race/ethnicity was assessed with a multi-check question item (i.e., African American or Black; Asian; South Asian; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native; White or Caucasian; Hispanic or Latino/a; and Middle Eastern or Arab American) with an optional write-in item for races/ethnicities not listed. Participants who selected more than one category were coded as "Multiracial," with the exception of participants who selected "Hispanic or Latino" or "Middle Eastern or Arab American."

7 Sexual orientation was assessed with a multi-check question item (i.e., gay, lesbian, straight/heterosexual, bisexual, questioning, and queer) with an optional write-in item for sexual orientations not listed. Students in the categories Queer, Another Sexual Orientation, and Questioning or Unsure did not also indicate that they were gay/lesbian or bisexual.

8 "Bisexual" and "pansexual" both describe the sexual orientations of people who can experience attraction to people of multiple gender identities. Bisexual identity is commonly described as either experiencing attraction to some male-identified people and some female-identified people or as experiencing attraction to some people of the same gender and some people of different genders. Pansexual identity is commonly defined as experiencing attraction to some people, regardless of their gender identities.

9 Gender was assessed with a multi-check question item (i.e., male, female, transgender, transgender male-to-female, transgender female-to-male, and genderqueer) with an optional write-in item for genders not listed in combination with an item that asked respondents their sex assigned at birth. Participants in the Transgender Female category selected "male-to-female" and/or selected "female," "transgender," and indicated that they were assigned male at birth; the category Transgender Male was calculated similarly. Participants were categorized as having Another Transgender Identity if they selected only "transgender" and provided no other information about their gender identities, if they selected both "male-to-female" and "female-to-male" transgender options, or if they selected both "male" and "female" and also indicated "transgender," regardless of birth sex.

10 School locale (urban, suburban, rural) was created by matching school district locale information from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) with the school district name and/or zip code provided by participants attending public schools.

11 Students were placed into region based on the state they were from — Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, DC; South: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia; Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin; West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

12 Darling, N., Caldwell, L. L., & Smith, R. (2005). Participation in school-based extracurricular activities and adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37(1), 51–76.

Fredericks, J. A., & Eccles, J. S. (2006). Is extracurricular participation associated with beneficial outcomes? Concurrent and longitudinal relations. *Developmental Psychology*, 42(4), 698–713.

Peck, S. C., Roeser, R. W., Zarrett, N., & Eccles, J. S. (2008). Exploring the roles of extracurricular activity quantity and quality in the educational resilience of vulnerable adolescents: Variable- and pattern-centered approaches. *Journal of Social Issues*, 64(1), 135–155.

13 Because of the large sample size and the multiple analyses conducted for this report, we use the more restrictive $p<.01$ in determinations of statistical significance for our analyses, unless otherwise indicated. Mean differences in the frequencies across types of biased remarks were examined using repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance, and percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. The multivariate effect was significant, Pillai's Trace = .70, $F(9, 7740) = 2011.61$, $p<.001$. Resulting univariate effects were considered at $p<.001$, and differences were significant with the exception of remarks about transgender people and remarks about religion.

14 Mean differences in the frequencies between types of biased remarks based on gender expression were examined using a repeated measures t-test and percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. The effect was significant, $t(7842) = 33.52$, $p<.001$.

15 Mean differences in the frequencies between intervention by school staff and peers for negative remarks about gender expression and homophobic remarks were examined using repeated measures t-tests. Effects were significant. School staff: $t(4958) = 24.54$, $p<.001$; Peers: $t(7359) = 4.98$, $p<.001$

16 See endnote 13.

17 Mean differences in the frequencies of verbal harassment across types were examined using repeated measures multiple analysis of variance: Pillai's Trace = .47, $F(4, 7558) = 1700.03$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were considered at $p<.01$.

18 Mean differences in the frequencies of physical harassment across types were examined using repeated measures multiple analysis of variance: Pillai's Trace = .21, $F(4, 7620) = 497.04$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were considered at $p<.01$. Levels of physical harassment based on race and based on disability were not significantly different; percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

19 Mean differences in the frequencies of physical assault across types were examined using repeated measures multiple analysis of variance: Pillai's Trace = .10, $F(4, 7699) = 214.42$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were considered at $p<.01$. Levels of physical assault based on race and based on disability were not significantly different; percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

20 Bochenek, M. & Brown, W. (2001). *Hatred in the hallways: Violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students in U.S. schools*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

Greytak, E. A., Kosciw, J. G., & Diaz, E. M. (2009). *Harsh realities: The experiences of transgender youth in our nation's schools*. New York: Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network.

21 GLSEN, CiPHR, & CCRC (2013). *Out online: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth on the Internet*. New York: GLSEN.

Jones, L. M., Mitchell, K. J., & Finkelhor, D. (2012). Trends in youth Internet victimization: Findings from three Youth Internet Safety Surveys 2000–2010. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 50, 179–186.

22 To test differences across groups, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with five weighted victimization variables (based on sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, race/ethnicity, and disability) as dependent variables. The independent variable was dichotomized, with "not a big deal" coded as 1 and other responses coded as 0. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .01, $F(5, 7277) = 17.23$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were considered at $p<.001$.

23 A small number of students (57) who reported that the victimization they experienced was "not a big deal" also reported that they had been physically assaulted.

24 To compare differences between groups, chi-square tests were performed looking at type of school staff response by whether it was effective or ineffective: Disciplined perpetrator: $\chi^2 = 461.78$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .44$. Contacted perpetrator's parents: $\chi^2 = 221.63$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .31$. Educated perpetrator about bullying: $\chi^2 = 156.25$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .26$. Educated all students about bullying: $\chi^2 = 59.44$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .16$.

25 To compare differences between groups, chi-square tests were performed looking at type of school staff response by whether it was effective or ineffective. Disciplined the reporting student: $\chi^2 = 84.09$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .189$; Did nothing/Told student to ignore: $\chi^2 = 831.86$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .594$; Contacted reporting student's parents: $\chi^2 = 12.24$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .072$; Attempted peer mediation/conflict resolution: $\chi^2 = 12.51$, $df = 3$, $p<.01$, $\phi = .073$.

26 stopbullying.gov. (n.d.). Misdirections in bullying prevention and intervention. Washington, D.C.

27 Greytak, E. A. (2014, April 7). *The role of pre-service education in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender-supportive practices of elementary teachers*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Conference, Philadelphia, PA.

28 To compare experiences of discrimination by gender identity, three chi-square tests were conducted. *Prevented from using preferred name*: $\chi^2 = 1081.560$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .383. Transgender students were most likely to experience this form of discrimination, followed by genderqueer and other gender students, followed by cisgender females, followed by cisgender males. *Required to use bathroom/locker room of legal sex*: $\chi^2 = 1096.869$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .385. Transgender students were most likely to experience this form of discrimination, followed by genderqueer and other gender students, followed by cisgender females, followed by cisgender males. *Prevented from wearing clothes of another gender (dress code violation)*: $\chi^2 = 164.255$, $df = 3$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .149. Transgender, other gender, and genderqueer students were more likely to experience this form of discrimination than cisgender males and females, who were not different from one another. Transgender students were also more likely to experience this form of discrimination than genderqueer students. Other gender students were not different from transgender and genderqueer students in experiencing this form of discrimination.

29 Craig, S. L., & Smith, M. S. (2014). The impact of perceived discrimination and social support on the school performance of multiethnic sexual minority youth. *Youth & Society*, 46(1), 30–50.

Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Diaz, E. M., & Bartkiewicz, M. J. (2010). *The 2009 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth in our nation's schools.* New York: GLSEN.

Russell, S. T., Sinclair, K. O., Poteat, V. P., & Koenig, B. W. (2012). Adolescent health and harassment based on discriminatory bias. *American Journal of Public Health*, 102(3), 493–495.

30 Heckman, J. J., Humphries, J. E., & Mader, N. S. (2010). The GED: NBER working paper no. 16064. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Tyler, J., & Lofstrom, M. (2008). Is the GED an effective route to postsecondary education for school dropouts? Bonn, Germany: Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA).

31 The open-ended responses were coded according to National Center for Education Statistics standards (http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/2002165.pdf) with a few exceptions: 1) "Communication, Journalism and Related Support Services" is a combined category of NCES "Communication, Journalism , and Related Programs" and "Communications Technologies/ Technicians and Support Services"; 2) "Engineering & Engineering Technologies" is a combined category of "Engineering" and "Engineering Technologies/Technicians"; 3) "Construction Trades, Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians" is a combined category of "Construction Trades" and "Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians"; 4) "Philosophy and Religious Studies and Religious Vocations" is a combined category of "Philosophy and Religious Studies" and "Theology and Religious Vocations". In addition, "Neuroscience" was coded as "Other Science" as opposed to the NCES classification of "Interdisciplinary."

For those students who indicated more than one intended major, we coded the first three majors indicated. Students were coded as "Don't Know/No Answer" if they wrote in that they were unsure or undecided or if they provided a response other than indicating a college major.

32 Eagan, K., Lozano, J. B., Hurtado, S., & Case, M. H. (2013). *The American freshman: National norms fall 2013*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.

Fries-Britt, S. & Holmes, K. M. (2012), Prepared and progressing: Black women in physics. In C. R. Chambers, R. V. Sharpe (Eds.), *Black female undergraduates on campus: Successes and challenges (Diversity in Higher Education, Volume 12)* (pp.199–218). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Park, J. J., & Denson, N. (2013). When race and class both matter: The relationship between socio-economic diversity, racial diversity, and student reports of cross-class interaction. *Research in Higher Education*, 54(7).

33 The 2013 CIRP Freshmen Survey: Eagan, K., Lozano, J. B., Hurtado, S., & Case, M. H. (2013). *The American freshman: National norms fall 2013*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.

34 To make comparisons between the NSCS and CIRP students, we combined some of the NCES codes from the NCES survey for equivalency. For "Security," we compared CIRP's Criminal Science, Law Enforcement and Military with NSCS's Military Science and Security. For "Social Sciences," we compared CIRP's Social Sciences with NSCS's Human Sciences, Public Administration & Social Service, Social Sciences and Psychology. For "Math & Computers," we compared CIRP's Math and Computer Science with NSCS's Math & Statistics and Computer Science. For "Arts & Humanities" we combined NSCS's Humanities, History, Philosophy & Religion, English, Languages, Cultural Studies. For "Biological Sciences," we combined students from NSCS in Biological Sciences with those students from Other Sciences who indicated Neuroscience.

35 For each college major category for which there was an equivalent reported in the 2013 CIRP Freshman Survey, we conducted a series of one-sample chi-square tests: Architecture/Urban Planning: $\chi^2 = 27.07$, $r = .16$, $p < .001$; Arts & Humanities: $\chi^2 = 726.19$, $r = .80$, $p < .001$; Biological Sciences: $\chi^2 = 25.58$, $r = .15$, $p < .001$; Business: $\chi^2 = 89.98$, $r = .28$, $p < .001$; Education: $\chi^2 = 37.85$, $r = .18$, $p < .001$; Engineering: $\chi^2 = 46.33$, $r = .20$, $p < .001$; Health: $\chi^2 = 8.67$, $r = .09$, $p < .01$; Law/Pre-Law: $\chi^2 = 47.388$, $r = .21$, $p < .001$; Math & Computer Science: $\chi^2 = 35.71$, $r = .18$, $p < .001$; Physical Sciences: $\chi^2 = 16.74$, $r = .12$, $p < .001$; Social Sciences: $\chi^2 = 222.54$, $r = .44$, $p < .001$; There was not a significant difference for Security. Effect sizes (ϕ) were considered to be indicative of a meaningful difference were those above $r = .10$. Effect sizes between .10 and .20 were considered to be small; those between .21 and .40 were considered to be moderate, and those greater than .40 were considered larger.

36 High and low levels of victimization are indicated by a cutoff at the mean score of victimization: students above the mean were characterized as "Experiencing Higher Levels of Victimization."

37 To test differences in post-secondary educational aspirations by severity of victimization, two chi-square tests were conducted. *Severity of victimization based on sexual orientation*: $\chi^2 = 43.425$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .075. Students who had experienced higher levels of victimization based on sexual orientation were less likely to say they planned to pursue post-secondary education. *Severity of victimization based on gender expression*: $\chi^2 = 58.155$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .088$. Students who had experienced higher levels of victimization based on gender expression were less likely to say they planned to pursue post-secondary education. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

38 To test differences in educational aspirations by experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with educational aspirations as the dependent variable, and experiencing discrimination as the independent variable. The main effect for experiencing discrimination was significant: $F(1, 7050) = 21.684$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$; 6.4% of students who experienced discriminatory policies or practices did not plan to go to pursue post-secondary education, compared to 3.9% of those who did not experience them. However, this difference was eliminated when we performed a similar analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for victimization due to sexual orientation and gender expression.

39 Gruber, J. E. & Fineran, S. (2008). Comparing the impact of bullying and sexual harassment victimization on the mental and physical health of adolescents. *Sex Roles*, 59, 1–13.

Salmon, G. James, A. Cassidy, E. L. & Javaloyes, M. A. (2000). Bullying a review: Presentations to an adolescent psychiatric service and within a school for emotionally and behaviourally disturbed children. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *5*, 563–579.

Kaltiala-Heino, R., Rimpela, M., Rantanen, P. & Rimpela, A. (2000). Bullying at school – an indicator of adolescents at risk for mental disorders. *Journal of Adolescence*, 23, 661–674.

40 Self-esteem was measured using the 10-item Likert-type Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1989), which includes such items as "I am able to do things as well as most people." Positive and negative self-esteem are indicated by a cutoff at the score indicating neither positive nor negative feelings about oneself: students above this cutoff were characterized as "Demonstrating Positive Self-Esteem."

Rosenberg, M. (1989). *Society and the adolescent self-image* (Revised ed.) Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

41 The relationship between self-esteem and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. *Victimization based on sexual orientation*: $r = -.284$, $p<.001$; *victimization based on gender expression*: $r = -.247$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

42 Depression was measured using the 20-item Likert-type CES-D depression scale (Eaton et al., 2004), which includes such items as "During the past week, I felt hopeful about the future." Higher levels of depression are indicated by a cutoff at the mean score of depression: students above the mean were characterized as "Demonstrating Higher Levels of Depression."

43 The relationship between depression and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. *Victimization based on sexual orientation*: $r = .392$, $p<.001$; *victimization based on gender expression*: $r = .324$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

44 Berghe, W. V., Dewaele, A., Cox, N., & Vincke, J. (2010). Minority-specific determinants of mental well-being among lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *40*(1), 153–166.

Bockting, W. O., Miner, M. H., Swinburne Romine, R. E., Hamilton, A., & Coleman, E. (2013). Stigma, mental health, and resilience in an online sample of the US transgender population. *American Journal of Public Health*, *103*(5), 943–951.

Hatzenbuehler, M. L., McLaughlin, K. A., Keyes, K. M., & Hasin, D. S. (2010). The impact of institutional discrimination on psychiatric disorders in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: A prospective study. *American Journal of Public Health*, *100*(3), 452–259.

Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: conceptual issues and research evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, *129*(5), 674.

Meyer, I. H. (1995). Minority stress and mental health in gay men. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *36*(1), 38–56.

45 To test differences in self-esteem by experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with self-esteem as the dependent variable, and experiencing discrimination as the independent variable. The main effect for experiencing discrimination was significant: $F(1, 7050) = 421.630$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .056$. With this analysis, we performed a similar, corresponding analysis controlling for victimization due to sexual orientation and gender expression. Even when accounting for these direct experiences of victimization, the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) revealed differences between students who had experienced discriminatory policies and practices and those who had not; thus, results of the ANOVAs is reported for the sake of simplicity.

46 Depression was measured by the CES-D. See endnote 42.

47 To test differences in depression by experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with depression as the dependent variable, and experiencing discrimination as the independent variable. The main effect for experiencing discrimination was significant: $F(1, 7050) = 623.707$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .081$. With this analysis, we performed a similar, corresponding analysis controlling for victimization due to sexual orientation and gender expression. Even when accounting for these direct experiences of victimization, the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) revealed differences between students who had experienced discriminatory policies and practices and those who had not; thus, results of the ANOVA are reported for the sake of simplicity.

48 The relationship between GPA and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. *Victimization based on sexual orientation*: $r = -.227$, $p<.001$; victimization based on gender expression: $r = -.201$, $p<.001$.

49 To test differences in educational achievement by experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with GPA as the dependent variable, and experiencing discrimination as the independent variable. The main effect for experiencing discrimination was significant: $F(1, 7050) = 169.175$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .023$. With this analysis and the others described below, we performed a similar, corresponding analysis controlling for victimization due to sexual orientation and gender expression. Even when accounting for these direct experiences of victimization, the ANCOVAs revealed differences between students who had experienced discriminatory policies and practices and those who had not; thus, results of the ANOVAs are reported for the sake of simplicity.

50 The relationship between missing school and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. *Victimization based on sexual orientation*: $r = .531$, $p<.001$; victimization based on gender expression: $r = .401$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

51 To test differences in missing school by experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with missing school as the dependent variable, and experiencing discrimination as the independent variable. The main effect for experiencing discrimination was significant: $F(1, 7050) = 663.883$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .086$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

52 Goodenow, C. & Grady, K.E. (1993). The relationship of school belonging and friends' values to academic motivation among urban adolescent students. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 62(1), 60–71.

Murdock, T. B. & Bolch, M. B. (2005). Risk and protective factors for poor school adjustment in lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) high school youth: Variable and person-centered analyses. *Psychology in the Schools*, 42(5), 159–172.

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53 Kosciw, J. G., Palmer, N. A., & Kull, R. M. (2014). Reflecting resiliency: Openness about sexual orientation and/or gender identity and its relationship to well-being and educational outcomes for LGBT students. *American Journal of Community Psychology*.

Russell, S.T., & Van Campen, K. (2011). Diversity and inclusion in youth development: What we can learn from marginalized young people. *Journal of Youth Development*, 6(3), 95–108.

Rotheram-Borus, M.J. & Langabeer, K.A. (2001). Developmental trajectories of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youths. In A.R. D'Augelli & C.J. Peterson (Eds.), *Lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities and youth* (pp. 97–128). New York: Oxford University Press.

54 Based on paired sample comparison tests of the percentage of students who said they were out to peers and school staff. Students were more likely to report being out to peers than to school staff ($t = 56.494$, $p<.001$).

55 To compare differences in outness to peers by gender identity, chi-square tests were conducted: $\chi^2 = 26.886$, $df = 9$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .060.Transgender, genderqueer, and other gender youth were equally likely to be out. Transgender youth were slightly more likely to be out than cisgender youth, who were not different from genderqueer or other gender youth.

56 High and low levels of victimization are indicated by a cutoff at the mean score of victimization: students above the mean were characterized as "Experiencing High Levels of Victimization."

57 To test differences in victimization based on sexual orientation by outness, two analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted, with victimization based on sexual orientation as the dependent variable, and outness to peers or school staff as the independent variable. The main effect for outness to peers was significant: $F(1, 7196) = 160.328$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$. The main effect for outness to school staff was significant: $F(1, 7180) = 105.841$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .015$.

58 To test differences in victimization based on gender expression by outness, two analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted, with victimization based on gender expression as the dependent variable, and outness to peers or school staff as the independent variable. The main effect for outness to peers was significant: $F(1, 7196) = 17.099$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. The main effect for outness to school staff was significant: $F(1, 7180) = 28.457$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$.

59 Self-esteem was measured using 10 4-point Likert-type items, such as "I am able to do things as well as most people." Positive and negative self-esteem are indicated by a cutoff at the score indicating neither positive nor negative feelings about oneself: students above this cutoff were characterized as "Demonstrating Positive Self-Esteem."

60 To test differences in self-esteem by outness, two analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted, with self-esteem as the dependent variable, and outness to peers or school staff as the independent variable. The main effect for outness to peers was significant: $F(1, 7117) = 63.408$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .009$. The main effect for outness to school staff was significant: $F(1, 7101) = 132.341$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .018$.

61 School belonging was measured using 18 4-point Likert-type items, such as "Other students in my school take my opinions seriously." Positive and negative school belonging are indicated by a cutoff at the score indicating neither positive nor negative attitudes about one's belonging in school: students above this cutoff were characterized as "Demonstrating Positive School Belonging."

62 To test differences in school belonging by outness, two analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted, with school belonging as the dependent variable, and outness to peers or school staff as the independent variable. The main effect for outness to peers was significant: $F(1, 7117) = 95.560$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$. The main effect for outness to school staff was significant: $F(1, 7101) = 157.889$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$.

63 A measure for the psychological sense of school membership was developed for use with adolescents by Carol Goodenow: Goodenow, C. (1993). The Psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: Scale development and educational correlates. *Psychology in the Schools*, 30(1), 79–90.

The measure includes 18 4-point Likert-type items, such as "Other students in my school take my opinions seriously." Positive and negative school belonging are indicated by a cutoff at the score indicating neither positive nor negative attitudes about one's belonging in school: students above this cutoff were characterized as "Demonstrating Positive School Belonging."

64 The relationship between school belonging and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. *Victimization based on sexual orientation*: $r = -.459$, $p<.001$; *victimization based on gender expression*: $r = -.379$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

65 To test differences in school belonging by experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with school belonging as the dependent variable, and experiencing discrimination as the independent variable. The main effect for experiencing discrimination was significant: $F(1, 7050) = 1236.525$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .149$.

66 Darling, N., Caldwell, L. L., & Smith, R. (2005). Participation in school-based extracurricular activities and adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37(1), 51–76.

Farb, A. F., & Matjasko, J. L. (2012). Recent advances in research on school-based extracurricular activities and adolescent development. *Developmental Review*, 32(1), 1–48.

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Peck, S. C., Roeser, R. W., Zarrett, N., & Eccles, J. S. (2008). Exploring the roles of extracurricular activity quantity and quality in the educational resilience of vulnerable adolescents: Variable and pattern-centered approaches. *Journal of Social Issues*, 64(1), 135–155.

67 Miceli, M. (2005). *Standing out, standing together: The social and political impact of gay-straight alliances*. New York: Routledge.

Sweat, J. W. (2004). *Crossing boundaries: Identity and activism in Gay-Straight Alliances*. University of California, Davis.

68 Griffin, P., Lee, C., Waugh, J., & Beyer, C. (2004). Describing roles that gay-straight alliances play in schools: From individual support to school change. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education*, 1(3), 7–22.

McCready, L. (2004). Some challenges facing queer youth programs in urban high schools: Racial segregation and denormalizing whiteness. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education*, 1(3), 37–51.

69 Darling, N., Caldwell, L. L., & Smith, R. (2005). Participation in school-based extracurricular activities and adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Leisure Research, 37*(1)*,* 51–76.

Fredericks, J. A., & Eccles, J. S. (2006). Is extracurricular participation associated with beneficial outcomes? Concurrent and longitudinal relations. *Developmental Psychology, 42*(4), 698–713.

Peck, S. C., Roeser, R. W., Zarrett, N., & Eccles, J. S. (2008). Exploring the roles of extracurricular activity quantity and quality in the educational resilience of vulnerable adolescents: Variable- and pattern-centered approaches. *Journal of Social Issues, 64*(1), 135–155.

70 Mean differences in comfort level talking to school staff across type of school staff member were examined using repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance and percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. The multivariate effect was significant, Pillai's Trace = .54, $F(7, 7316) = 1201.28$, $p<.001$. Univariate analyses were considered significant at $p<.01$.

71 Mean differences in talking to school staff across type of school staff member were examined using repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance and percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. The multivariate effect was significant, Pillai's Trace = .55, $F(7, 7369) = 1260.46$, $p<.001$. Univariate analyses were considered significant at $p<.01$.

72 Advancement Project, Alliance for Educational Justice, & GSA Network. (2012). Two wrongs don't make a right: Why zero tolerance is not the solution to bullying. Retrieved from http://gsanetwork.org/files/aboutus/APJ-005_D5-FINALsmall.pdf

Hockenberry, S., (2013). Juveniles in residential placement, 2010. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, US Department of Justice.

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73 Kang-Brown, J., Trone, J., Fratello, J., Daftary-Kapur, T. (2013). *Generation later: What we've learned about zero tolerance in schools.* New York, NY: Vera Institute of Justice.

74 Fabelo, T., Thompson, M. D., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks, M. P., & Booth, E. A. (2011). *Breaking schools' rules: A statewide study of how school discipline relates to students' success and juvenile justice involvement*. New York, NY: Justice Center & Council of State Governments.

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75 Himmelstein, K. E., & Brückner, H. (2011). Criminal-justice and school sanctions against nonheterosexual youth: A national longitudinal study. *Pediatrics*, 127(1), 49–57.

Hunt, J., & Moodie-Mills, A. (2012). *The unfair criminalization of gay and transgender youth*. Washington: Center for American Progress.

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76 Hunt, J., & Moodie-Mills, A. (2012). *The unfair criminalization of gay and transgender youth*. Washington: Center for American Progress.

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Irvine, A. (2010). 'We've had three of them': Addressing the invisibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and gender nonconforming youths in the juvenile justice system. *Columbia Journal of Gender & Law, 19*, 675–701.

77 To compare disciplinary experiences by experiences of discrimination at school, four chi-square tests were conducted. Appeared before a juvenile or criminal court: $\chi^2 = 21.144$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .052. Students who had experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school were more likely to have appeared before a juvenile or criminal court than students who had not experienced these policies or practices. Been arrested: $\chi^2 = 27.237$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .059. Students who had experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school were more likely to have been arrested than students who had not experienced these policies or practices. Served time in a juvenile or adult detention facility: $\chi^2 = 22.418$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .054. Students who had experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school were more likely to have served time in a juvenile or adult detention facility than students who had not experienced these policies or practices. Experienced any of these types of disciplinary action: $\chi^2 = 37.477$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .070. Students who had experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school were more likely to have experienced any of these types of disciplinary action than students who had not experienced these policies or practices.

78 To compare disciplinary experiences by experiences of discrimination at school, four chi-square tests were conducted using a dichotomized variable indicating that students had experienced discriminatory policies or procedures described in the section Experiences of Discrimination at School, not including being punished for PDA or for identifying as LGBT. Received detention: $\chi^2 = 181.867$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .153. Students who had experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school were more likely to have received detention than students who had not experienced these policies or practices. Been suspended from school: $\chi^2 = 132.932$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .131. Students who had experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school were more likely to have been suspended than students who had not experienced these policies or practices. Been expelled from school: $\chi^2 = 21.492$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .053. Students who had experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school were more likely to have been expelled than students who had not experienced these policies or practices. Experienced any of these forms of school discipline: $\chi^2 = 206.412$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .163. Students who had experienced discriminatory policies or practices at school reported higher rates of school disciplinary action than students who had not experienced these policies or practices.

79 Fabelo, T., Thompson, M. D., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks, M. P., & Booth, E. A. (2011). *Breaking schools' rules: A statewide study of how school discipline relates to students' success and juvenile justice involvement*. New York, NY: Justice Center & Council of State Governments.

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Reynolds, C. R., Skiba, R. J., Graham, S., Sheras, P., Conoley, J. C., & Garcia-Vazquez, E. (2008). Are zero tolerance policies effective in the schools? An evidentiary review and recommendations. *The American Psychologist, 63*(9), 852–862.

80 To compare disciplinary experiences by race/ethnicity, eight chi-square tests were conducted. Received detention: $\chi^2 = 43.717$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .078. Hispanic/Latino and multiracial students were more likely to have received detention than White/European American students and Asian/Pacific Islander students. Black/African American students were also more likely to have received detention than White/European American students, but were not different from Asian/Pacific Islander students. *Been suspended from school:* $\chi^2 = 46.821$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .081. Black/African American and multiracial students were more likely to have been suspended than Hispanic/Latino, White/European American, and Asian/Pacific Islander students. *Been expelled from school:* $\chi^2 = 16.200$, $df = 4$, $p<.01$, Cramer's V = .047. Multiracial students were more likely to have been expelled than Hispanic/Latino and White/European American students. Black/African American and Asian/Pacific Islander students were not different from multiracial, Hispanic/Latino, or White/European American students. *Experienced any of these forms of school discipline:* $\chi^2 = 53.359$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .086. Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, and multiracial students reported higher rates of school disciplinary action than White/European American and Asian/Pacific Islander students.

Appeared before a juvenile or criminal court: $\chi^2 = 2.198$, $df = 4$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .017. Students did not differ from one another by race/ethnicity in their rates of having appeared before a court. *Been arrested:* $\chi^2 = 4.295$, $df = 4$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .024. Students did not differ from one another by race/ethnicity in their rates of having been arrested. *Served time in a juvenile or adult detention facility:* $\chi^2 = 2.135$, $df = 4$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .017. Students did not differ from one another by race/ethnicity in their rates of having served time in a detention facility. *Experienced any of these forms of contact with the juvenile or criminal justice system:* $\chi^2 = 3.083$, $df = 4$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .021. Students did not differ from one another by race/ethnicity in their overall contact with the justice system.

81 Irvine, A. (2010). 'We've had three of them': Addressing the invisibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and gender nonconforming youths in the juvenile justice system. *Columbia Journal of Gender & Law, 19*, 675–701.

82 Bonczar, T. P. (2003). Prevalence of imprisonment in the U.S. Population, 1974–2001. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/piusp01.pdf

Grant, J. M., Mottet, L., Tanis, J. E., Harrison, J., Herman, J., & Keisling, M. (2011). *Injustice at every turn: A report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality.

83 To compare disciplinary experiences by gender identity, eight chi-square tests were conducted. *Received detention:* $\chi^2 = 26.474$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .060. Transgender and other gender students were more likely to have received detention than genderqueer, cisgender male, and cisgender female students. *Been suspended from school:* $\chi^2 = 21.352$, $df = 4$, $p<.05$, Cramer's V = .054. Transgender and other gender students were more likely

to have been suspended than genderqueer, cisgender male, and cisgender female students. *Been expelled from school:* $\chi^2 = 9.684$, $df = 4$, $p<.05$, Cramer's V = .036. Other gender students were more likely to have been expelled than genderqueer, cisgender male, and cisgender female students; transgender students were not different from other students. *Experienced any of these forms of school discipline:* $\chi^2 = 27.914$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .061. Transgender and other gender students reported higher rates of school disciplinary action than genderqueer, cisgender male, and cisgender female students.

Appeared before a juvenile or criminal court: $\chi^2 = 5.699$, $df = 4$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .028. Students did not differ from one another by gender identity in their rates of having appeared before a court. *Been arrested:* $\chi^2 = 5.144$, $df = 4$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .026. Students did not differ from one another by gender identity in their rates of having been arrested. *Served time in a juvenile or adult detention facility:* $\chi^2 = 2.135$, $df = 4$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .017. Students did not differ from one another by gender identity in their rates of having served time in a detention facility. *Experienced any of these forms of contact with the juvenile or criminal justice system:* $\chi^2 = 15.944$, $df = 4$, $p<.01$, Cramer's V = .046. Transgender and other gender students reported higher rates of justice system contact than cisgender males and genderqueer students, who were not different from one another. Cisgender females reported higher rates of justice system contact compared to cisgender males, but were not different from transgender, genderqueer, or other gender students.

84 To compare disciplinary experiences by gender conformity, eight chi-square tests were conducted among cisgender students. *Received detention:* $\chi^2 = 22.577$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .064. Gender nonconforming students were more likely to have received detention than gender conforming students. *Been suspended from school:* $\chi^2 = 27.830$, $df = 1$, $p<.05$, Cramer's V = .071. Gender nonconforming students were more likely to have been suspended than genderqueer, cisgender male, and cisgender female students. *Been expelled from school:* $\chi^2 = 3.277$, $df = 1$, $p>.05$, Cramer's V = .024. Cisgender students did not differ from one another by gender expression in their rates of expulsion. *Experienced any of these forms of school discipline:* $\chi^2 = 34.236$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .079. Gender nonconforming students reported higher rates of school disciplinary action than gender conforming students.

Appeared before a juvenile or criminal court: $\chi^2 = 1.676$, $df = 1$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .017. Cisgender students did not differ from one another by gender expression in their rates of having appeared before a court. *Been arrested:* $\chi^2 = .014$, $df = 1$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .002. Cisgender students did not differ from one another by gender expression in their rates of having been arrested. *Served time in a juvenile or adult detention facility:* $\chi^2 = .002$, $df = 1$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .001. Cisgender students did not differ from one another by gender expression in their rates of having served time in a detention facility. *Experienced any of these forms of contact with the juvenile or criminal justice system:* $\chi^2 = 1.302$, $df = 1$, $p<.01$, Cramer's V = .015. Cisgender students did not differ from one another by gender expression in their rates of overall justice system contact.

85 To test differences in hearing biased remarks by presence of a GSA, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with GSA presence as the independent variable, and frequency of hearing biased remarks as the dependent variables. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .047, $F(5, 7773) = 77.317$, $p<.001$. Here and elsewhere, percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

The univariate effect for GSA presence in hearing "gay" used in a negative way was significant: $F(1, 7777) = 287.850$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .036$. The univariate effect for GSA presence in hearing "no homo" was significant: $F(1, 7777) = 200.406$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .025$. The univariate effect for GSA presence in hearing other homophobic remarks was significant: $F(1, 7777) = 239.380$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .030$. The univariate effect for GSA presence in hearing negative remarks re: gender expression was significant: $F(1, 7777) = 44.466$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .006$. The univariate effect for GSA presence in hearing negative remarks about transgender people was significant: $F(1, 7777) = 102.048$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$.

86 To test differences in feeling unsafe by presence of a GSA, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with GSA presence as the independent variable, and feeling unsafe, missing school due to feeling unsafe, and victimization as the dependent variables. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .057, $F(5, 7559) = 90.725$, $p<.001$.The univariate effect for GSA presence in feeling unsafe due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(1, 7563) = 267.633$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .034$. The univariate effect for GSA presence in feeling unsafe due to gender expression was significant: $F(1, 7563) = 103.243$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$.

87 To test differences in victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression by presence of a GSA, these variables were included in the MANOVA described above. The univariate effect for GSA presence in victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(1, 7563) = 350.437$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .044$. The univariate effect for GSA presence in victimization due to gender expression was significant: $F(1, 7563) = 192.870$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .025$. For illustrative purposes, figures depicting differences in victimization based on sexual orientation or gender expression rely on a cutoff at the mean score of victimization: students above the mean were characterized as "Experiencing Higher Levels of Victimization."

88 To test differences in missing school by presence of a GSA, this variable was included in the MANOVA described above. The univariate effect for GSA presence in missing school in the past month was significant: $F(1, 7563) = 168.576$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$.

89 To test differences in number of supportive school staff by presence of a GSA, a t-test was conducted, with GSA presence as the independent variable, and number of supportive staff as the dependent variable. The effect for GSA presence in number of supportive staff was significant: $t(7709) = 37.718$, $p<0.001$. In addition, a chi-square test was conducted to compare the likelihood of having a supportive staff member by presence of a GSA: $\chi^2 = 247.848$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, $\phi = .179$. Students who had a GSA were more likely to have supportive staff members than students who did not have a GSA.

90 To test differences in staff intervention by presence of a GSA, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with GSA presence as the independent variable, and frequency of staff intervention as the dependent variables. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .022, $F(2, 4928) = 55.795$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for GSA presence in staff intervention in homophobic remarks was significant: $F(1, 4929) = 108.223$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .021$. The univariate effect for GSA presence in staff intervention in negative remarks about gender expression was significant: $F(1, 4929) = 19.257$, $p<0.01$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$.

91 To test differences in peer acceptance and school belonging by presence of a GSA, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with peer acceptance and school belonging as the dependent variables, and presence of a GSA as the independent variable. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .107, $F(2, 7550) = 451.442$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect of GSA on peer acceptance was significant: $F(1, 7551) = 855.006$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .102$.

The full breakdown of student responses to the question, "In general, how accepting do you think students at your school are of LGBT people?" was as follows: not at all accepting, 5.3%; not very accepting, 31.2%; neutral, 23.0%; somewhat accepting, 31.0%; very accepting, 14.8%.

92 To test differences in school belonging and presence of a GSA, school belonging was included in the MANOVA described above. The univariate effect for GSA presence in school belonging was significant: $F(1, 7551) = 500.249$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .062$.

93 Definition of multicultural education. (2003). National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME).

94 Style, E. (1996). Curriculum as window & mirror. *Social Science Record*, 33(2), 21–28.

95 To test differences in hearing homophobic remarks by presence of an inclusive curriculum, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with inclusive curriculum presence as the independent variable, and frequency of hearing biased remarks as the dependent variables. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .072, $F(5, 7768) = 121.078$, $p<.001$.

The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum presence in hearing "gay" used in a negative way was significant: $F(1, 7772) = 450.869$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .055$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum presence in hearing "no homo" was significant: $F(1, 7772) = 234.995$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .029$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum presence in hearing other homophobic remarks was significant: $F(1, 7772) = 418.842$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .051$.

96 To test differences in hearing biased remarks about gender identity or gender expression by presence of an inclusive curriculum, these variables were included in the MANOVA described above. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum presence in hearing negative remarks re: gender expression was significant: $F(1, 7772) = 173.467$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum presence in hearing negative remarks about transgender people was significant: $F(1, 7772) = 117.411$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .015$.

97 To test differences in victimization by presence of an inclusive curriculum, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with inclusive curriculum as the independent variable, and victimization due to sexual orientation and gender expression, feeling unsafe, and missing school as the dependent variables. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .050, $F(5, 7554) = 78.997$, $p<.001$.

The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum in victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(1, 7558) = 210.247$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .027$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum in victimization due to gender expression was significant: $F(1, 7558) = 142.635$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$.

98 To test differences in feeling unsafe and missing school by presence of an inclusive curriculum, these variables were included in the MANOVA described above. The univariate effect for an inclusive curriculum in feeling unsafe due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(1, 7558) = 301.562$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .038$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum in feeling unsafe due to gender expression was significant: $F(1, 7558) = 167.527$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum in missing school in the past month was significant: $F(1, 7558) = 146.028$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$.

99 To test differences in talking to school staff about LGBT issues by presence of an inclusive curriculum, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with inclusive curriculum presence as the independent variable, and talking to school staff and feeling comfortable talking to school staff about LGBT issues as the dependent variables. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .085, $F(2, 7626) = 354.751$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum in having a positive or helpful conversation about LGBT issues was significant: $F(1, 7627) = 565.363$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .069$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum in feeling comfortable talking with a staff member about LGBT issues was significant: $F(1, 7627) = 490.253$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .060$.

100 To test differences in peer acceptance by presence of an inclusive curriculum, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with peer acceptance and school belonging as the dependent variables, and presence of an inclusive curriculum as the independent variable. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .125, $F(2, 7542) = 539.292$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum in peer acceptance was significant: $F(1, 7543) = 825.725$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .099$.

101 To test differences in intervention by presence of an inclusive curriculum, four analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted, with inclusive curriculum presence as the independent variable, and frequency of student and staff intervention as the dependent variables. The main effect for inclusive curriculum in staff intervention in homophobic remarks was significant: $F(1, 4918) = 261.323$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .050$. The main effect for inclusive curriculum in student intervention in homophobic remarks was significant: $F(1, 4918) = 111.349$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$. The main effect for inclusive curriculum in staff intervention in negative remarks about gender expression was significant: $F(1, 4918) = 163.127$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .032$. The main effect for inclusive curriculum in student intervention in negative remarks about gender expression was significant: $F(1, 4918) = 94.710$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$.

102 To test differences in school belonging and presence of an inclusive curriculum, school belonging was included in the MANOVA described above. The univariate effect for inclusive curriculum presence in school belonging was significant: $F(1, 7543) = 855.327$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .102$.

103 College majors were categorized in the following manner. *Arts and Humanities*: Communications, Cultural Studies, English, Foreign Languages, History, Humanities, Philosophy and Religion, and Visual and Performing Arts; *Social Sciences*: Psychology and Social Sciences; *STEM*: Biology, Computer and Math, Engineering, and Physical Sciences.

High school classes were categorized in the following manner: *Arts and Humanities*: Art, English, Foreign Language, History, and Music; *Social Sciences*: Psychology and Sociology; *STEM*: Math and Science.

104 Differences in college major interest by positive curricular inclusion in high school were tested by a series of chi-square tests. The relationship for intended STEM majors was statistically significant: $\chi^2 = 9.71$, $\phi = .09$, $p<.001$, $df = 1$.

105 The relationship for intended social science majors was marginally significant: $\chi^2 = 4.80$, $\phi = .06$, $p<.05$, $df = 1$.

106 Birch, S.H. & Ladd, G.W. (1997). The teacher-child relationship and children's early school adjustment. *Journal of School Psychology*, 35(1), 61–79.

Klem, A.M., & Connell, J.P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health*, 74(7), 262–273.

Wentzel, K.R. (1997). Student motivation in middle school: The role of perceived pedagogical caring. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89(3), 411–419.

107 The relationships between number of supportive staff and feeling unsafe at school and missing school due to feeling unsafe were examined through Pearson correlations. *Feeling unsafe because of sexual orientation*: $r = -.307$, $p<.001$; *Feeling unsafe due to gender expression*: $r = -.229$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. *Missing school*: $r = -.287$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

108 The relationship between number of supportive staff and post-secondary educational aspirations was examined through Pearson correlations: $r = .112$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

109 Visit glsen.org/safespace for more information or to obtain a Safe Space Kit for your school.

110 To compare students' perceptions of school staff based on the presence of Safe Space stickers/posters, a multiple analysis of covariance (MANOVA) was conducted, with Safe Space sticker/poster presence as the independent variable, and number of supportive staff, talking to teachers and counselors, and also feeling comfortable talking to teachers and counselors about LGBT issues as the dependent variables. The main effect for a Safe Space sticker/poster presence on the number of supportive staff was significant: $F(1, 7445) = 655.39$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .081$. With this analysis and the others described below, we performed a similar, corresponding analysis controlling for the presence of a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or other LGBT-supportive club at school. Even when accounting for the presence of a GSA, the analysis revealed differences between students who had seen a Safe Space sticker/poster at school and those who had not; thus, results of the initial MANOVA are reported for the sake of simplicity.

111 To test differences in talking to school staff about LGBT issues by presence of a Safe Space sticker/poster, an multiple analysis of (MANOVA) was conducted (See endnote 110). The main effect for presence of a Safe Space sticker in having had a positive or helpful conversation about LGBT issues was significant with teachers: $F(1, 7453) = 309.64$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .040$; and also with counselors: $F(1, 7453) = 210.48$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .027$. The main effect for presence of a Safe Space sticker in feeling comfortable talking with a staff member about LGBT issues was significant for teachers: $F(1, 7453) = 240.22$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .031$; and also for counselors: $F(1, 7453) = 199.17$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .026$. With these analyses and the one described above, we performed a similar, corresponding analysis controlling for the presence of a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or other LGBT-supportive club at school. Even when accounting for the presence of a GSA, the analyses revealed differences between students who had seen a Safe Space sticker/poster at school and those who had not; thus, results of the initial MANOVA are reported for the sake of simplicity.

112 The relationship between number of supportive staff and GPA was examined through Pearson correlations: $r = .146$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

113 Goodenow, C., & Grady, K. E. (1993). The relationship of school belonging and friends' values to academic motivation among urban adolescent students. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 62(1), 60–71.

114 The relationship between number of supportive staff and school belonging was examined through Pearson correlations: $r = .503$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

115 The relationship between feeling unsafe due to sexual orientation or gender expression and frequency of teacher intervention was examined through Pearson correlations. *Intervention in homophobic language*: $r = -.189$, $p<.001$; *intervention in negative remarks about gender expression*: $r = -.140$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

116 The relationship between missing school due to feeling unsafe and frequency of teacher intervention was examined through Pearson correlations. *Intervention in homophobic language*: $r = -.156$, $p<.001$; *intervention in negative remarks about gender expression*: $r = -.083$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

117 The relationship between feeling unsafe due to sexual orientation or gender expression and frequency of teacher intervention was examined through a Pearson correlation: $r = -.266$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

118 The relationship between missing school due to feeling unsafe and frequency of teacher intervention was examined through a Pearson correlation: $r = -.309$, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

119 To test differences in victimization by effectiveness of staff intervention, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with effectiveness of staff intervention as the independent variable, and victimization due to sexual orientation and gender expression as the dependent variables. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .094, $F(2, 2257) = 116.414$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for effectiveness of intervention on victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(1, 2258) = 230.103$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .092$. The univariate effect for effectiveness of intervention on victimization due to gender expression was significant: $F(1, 2258) = 144.695$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .060$.

120 To test differences in biased language by type of school policy, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with frequency of hearing biased language as the dependent variable and policy type as the independent variable. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .044, $F(15, 23328) = 23.399$, $p<.001$.

The univariate effect of policy type on hearing "gay" in a negative way was significant: $F(3, 7778) = 79.671$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .030$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that "gay" was heard negatively least frequently in schools with comprehensive policies, followed by schools with partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with a generic policy, followed by schools with no policy. The univariate effect of policy type on hearing "no homo" was significant: $F(3, 7778) = 56.483$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .021$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that "no homo" was heard least frequently in schools with comprehensive policies and schools with partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with generic policies, followed by schools with no policy; there were no differences in the frequency of hearing "no homo" between schools with comprehensive policies and schools with partially enumerated policies. The univariate effect of policy type on hearing other homophobic remarks was significant: $F(3, 7778) = 68.732$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .026$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that other homophobic language was heard least frequently in schools with comprehensive policies, followed by schools with partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with a generic policy, followed by schools with no policy. The univariate effect of policy type on hearing negative remarks re: gender expression was significant: $F(3, 7778) = 40.269$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .015$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that negative remarks re: gender expression were heard least frequently in schools with comprehensive policies, followed by schools with partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with a generic policy, followed by schools with no policy. The univariate effect of policy type on hearing negative remarks about transgender people was significant: $F(3, 7778) = 24.916$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .010$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that negative remarks about transgender people were heard negatively least frequently in schools with comprehensive and partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with a generic policy, followed by schools with no policy.

121 Based on Bonferroni post-hoc tests referenced above. Schools with comprehensive policies differed from those with partially enumerated policies at the $p<.05$ level. Schools with comprehensive policies differed from those with generic policies or no policy at the $p<.001$ level.

122 To test differences in rates of victimization by type of school policy, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with frequency of victimization as the dependent variable and policy type as the independent variable. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .021, $F(6, 15204) = 26.670$, $p<.001$.

The univariate effect of policy type on rates of victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(3, 7602) = 52.756$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .020$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that students were least victimized based on their sexual orientation in schools with comprehensive policies and schools with partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with a generic policy, followed by schools with no policy. The univariate effect of policy type on victimization due to gender expression was significant: $F(3, 7602) = 32.470$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that students were least victimized based on their gender expression in schools with comprehensive policies and schools with partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with generic policies, followed by schools with no policy.

123 To test differences in rates of staff intervention in biased language by type of school policy, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with frequency of intervention as the dependent variable and policy type as the independent variable. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .049, $F(6, 9852) = 41.467$, $p<.001$.

The univariate effect of policy type on rates of intervention in homophobic language was significant: $F(3, 4926) = 71.844$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .042$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that teachers intervened most frequently in schools with comprehensive policies, followed by schools with partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with a generic policy, followed by schools with no policy. The univariate effect of policy type on staff intervention in negative remarks re: gender expression was significant: $F(3, 4926) = 42.104$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .025$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that staff intervened most frequently in schools with comprehensive policies, followed by schools with partially enumerated policies, followed by schools with generic policies, followed by schools with no policy.

124 To test differences in rates of student reporting of incidents by type of school policy, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with frequency of student reporting as the dependent variable and policy type as the independent variable. The main effect of policy type on rates of reporting was significant: $F(3, 5452) = 19.226$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .010$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that students reported most frequently in schools with comprehensive policies, followed by schools with partly enumerated policies, followed by schools with a generic policy or no policy.

125 To test differences in effectiveness of staff intervention by type of school policy, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with effectiveness staff of intervention as the dependent variable and policy type as the independent variable. The main effect of policy type on effectiveness of intervention was significant: $F(3, 2346) = 38.687$, $p<0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .047$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that staff intervention was most effective in schools with comprehensive and partly enumerated policies, followed by schools with a generic policy, followed by schools with no policy.

126 Given the relatively small sample sizes of Middle Eastern/Arab American and Native American/American Indian LGBT students and LGBT students with "other" races/ethnicities, we did not include these three groups in the comparisons of school experiences by race or ethnicity.

127 To compare feeling unsafe by race/ethnicity, three chi-square tests were conducted. *Unsafe because of sexual orientation*: $\chi^2 = 14.643$, $df = 4$, $p<.01$, Cramer's V = .045. White/European and Multiracial students were more likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation than Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic/Latino students; Black/African American students were not different from other groups of students. *Unsafe because of gender expression*: $\chi^2 = 6.481$, $df = 4$, $p>.10$, Cramer's V = .030. Although the overall analysis was non-significant, White/European students were more likely to feel unsafe because of their gender expression than Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students; Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Multiracial students were not different from other groups of students. *Unsafe because of race/ethnicity*: $\chi^2 = 448.407$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .249. Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander, and Multiracial students were more likely to feel unsafe because of their race/ethnicity than White/European students.

128 To compare experiences of harassment and assault by race/ethnicity, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the nine harassment and assault variables as dependent variables. The multivariate effect was significant: Pillai's trace = .134, $F(36, 27476) = 26.487$, $p<.001$.

The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in verbal harassment based on sexual orientation was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 9.407$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students reported lower levels of verbal harassment based on sexual orientation than other students. Other groups of students were not different from one another in their experiences of verbal harassment based on sexual orientation. The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in physical harassment based on sexual orientation was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 5.926$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that Multiracial students reported higher levels of physical harassment based on sexual orientation than Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students and Black/African American students. White students also reported higher levels of physical harassment based on sexual orientation than Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students. Hispanic/Latino students were not different from any group of students. The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in physical assault based on sexual orientation was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 3.132$, $p<.05$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that Multiracial students reported higher levels of physical assault based on sexual orientation than Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students. Other groups of students were not different from one another in physical assault based on sexual orientation.

The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in verbal harassment based on gender expression was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 4.074$, $p<.01$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that White, Hispanic/Latino, and Multiracial students reported higher levels of verbal harassment based on gender expression than Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students. Black/African American students were not different from any group of students. The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in physical harassment based on gender expression was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 3.489$, $p<.01$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that Multiracial students reported higher levels of physical harassment based on gender expression than Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students. Other groups of students were not different from one another in physical harassment based on gender expression. The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in physical assault based on gender expression was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 2.658$, $p<.05$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that students were not different from one another in physical assault based on gender expression.

The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in verbal harassment based on race/ethnicity was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 215.315$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .111$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that White/European students reported lower levels of verbal harassment based on race/ethnicity than other students. Other groups of students were not different from one another in their experiences of verbal harassment based on race/ethnicity. The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in physical harassment based on race/ethnicity was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 25.672$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .015$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that White/European students reported lower levels of physical harassment based on race/ethnicity than Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Multiracial students. White/European and Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students were not different from one another in their experiences of physical harassment based on race/ethnicity. Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students were not different from other groups in these experiences, either. The univariate effect of race/ethnicity in physical assault based on race/ethnicity was significant: $F(4, 6874) = 6.894$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that White/European students reported lower levels of physical assault based on race/ethnicity than Hispanic/Latino and Multiracial students. Black/African American, White/European, and Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students were not different from one another on this measure. Black/African American and Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander students were also not different from Hispanic/Latino and Multiracial students on this measure.

129 Gender was assessed with a multi-check question item (i.e., male, female, transgender, transgender male-to-female, transgender female-to-male, and genderqueer) with an optional write-in item for genders not listed in combination with an item that asked respondents their sex assigned at birth. Cisgender respondents are those, either male or female, whose gender identity is aligned with the sex/gender they were assigned at birth, indicating that they chose only male or female in response to the gender identity item and that this was same response given to the sex assigned at birth item. Transgender respondents included transgender females (those who selected "male-to-female" and/or selected "female," "transgender," and indicated that they were assigned male at birth), transgender males (calculated similarly as transgender females), transgender students who did not also identify as male or female (e.g., those who selected only "transgender"). Those who could not be classified as cisgender male, cisgender females, or transgender, and did not identify as genderqueer are included in the "another gender identity" category.

130 To compare feeling unsafe by gender identity, chi-square tests were conducted. Unsafe because of gender: $\chi^2 = 1755.16$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .48; unsafe because of gender expression: $\chi^2 = 973.99$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .36.

131 To compare experiences of harassment and assault by gender identity, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the three weighted variables (victimization based on: sexual orientation, gender expression, gender) as dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .17, $F(12, 21474) = 107.62$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for victimization due to gender expression was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 175.35$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .089$. The univariate effect for victimization due to gender was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 195.78$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .099$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

132 To compare experiences of harassment and assault by gender identity, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the three weighted variables (victimization based on: sexual orientation, gender expression, gender) as dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .17, $F(12, 21474) = 107.62$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 238.08$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .021$. Pairwise comparisons (at $p<.01$) indicated that transgender students had higher levels of victimization than all other gender groups, with the exception of students with "another" gender identity (e.g., bigender). Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

133 To compare feeling unsafe based on sexual orientation by gender identity, a chi-square test was conducted: $\chi^2 = 108.33$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .12.

134 Herman, J. L. (2013). Gendered restrooms and minority stress: The public regulation of gender and its impact on transgender people's lives. *Journal of Public Management & Social Policy*, 19(1), 65–80.

Sausa, L. A. (2005). Translating research into practice: Trans youth recommendations for improving school systems. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education*, 3(1), 15–28.

135 We compared percentages of students avoiding bathrooms and locker rooms at school with a multivariate analysis of variance where the weighted variables for victimization based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender were included as covariates. Differences were significant: Pillai's Trace = .06, $F(8, 14310) = 54.93$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for avoiding bathrooms was significant: $F(4, 7155) = 99.48$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .053$. The univariate effect for avoiding locker rooms was significant: $F(4, 7155) = 43.04$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .023$.

136 To compare feeling unsafe among transgender students (transgender males, transgender females, and transgender students who do not identify as male or female), chi-square tests were conducted. Unsafe because of gender expression: $\chi^2 = 16.08$, $df = 2$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .15; unsafe because of gender: $\chi^2 = 27.20$, $df = 2$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .20. There were no significant differences in feeling unsafe because of sexual orientation.

To compare experiences of harassment and assault among transgender students, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the three weighted variables (victimization based on: sexual orientation, gender expression, gender) as dependent variables. Although the multivariate results were significant (Pillai's Trace = .07, $F(6, 1346) = 7.887$, $p<.001$), the univariate effects did not reach the $p<.01$ criteria for statistical significance.

137 We compared percentages of transgender students (transgender males, transgender females, and transgender students who do not identify as male or female) avoiding bathrooms and locker rooms at school with a multivariate analysis of variance where the weighted variables for victimization based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender were included as covariates. The

multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .03, $F(4, 1342) = 5.00$, $p<.01$. The univariate effect for avoiding locker rooms was significant: $F(2, 671) = 8.19$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .024$. The univariate effect for avoiding bathrooms was not significant.

138 To compare feeling unsafe by gender identity, chi-square tests were conducted. Unsafe because of gender: $\chi^2 = 1755.16$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .48; unsafe because of gender expression: $\chi^2 = 973.99$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .36.

139 To compare experiences of harassment and assault by gender identity, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the three weighted variables (victimization based on: sexual orientation, gender expression, gender) as dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .17, $F(12, 21474) = 107.62$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for victimization due to gender expression was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 175.35$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .089$. The univariate effect for victimization due to gender was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 195.78$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .099$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

140 To compare feeling unsafe based on sexual orientation by gender identity, a chi-square test was conducted: $\chi^2 = 108.33$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .12.

141 To compare experiences of harassment and assault by gender identity, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the three weighted variables (victimization based on: sexual orientation, gender expression, gender) as dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .17, $F(12, 21474) = 107.62$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 238.08$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .021$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

142 We compared percentages of students avoiding bathrooms and locker rooms at school with a multivariate analysis of variance where the weighted variables for victimization based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender were included as covariates. Differences were significant: Pillai's Trace = .06, $F(8, 14310) = 54.93$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for avoiding bathrooms was significant: $F(4, 7155) = 99.48$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .053$. The univariate effect for avoiding locker rooms was significant: $F(4, 7155) = 43.04$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .023$.

143 To compare feeling unsafe by gender identity, chi-square tests were conducted. Unsafe because of gender: $\chi^2 = 1755.16$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .48; unsafe because of gender expression: $\chi^2 = 973.99$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .36.

144 To compare feeling unsafe based on sexual orientation by gender identity, a chi-square test was conducted: $\chi^2 = 108.33$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .12.

145 To compare experiences of harassment and assault by gender identity, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the three weighted variables (victimization based on: sexual orientation, gender expression, gender) as dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .17, $F(12, 21474) = 107.62$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 238.08$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .021$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

146 We compared percentages of students avoiding bathrooms and locker rooms at school with a multivariate analysis of variance where the weighted variables for victimization based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender were included as covariates. Differences were significant: Pillai's Trace = .06, $F(8, 14310) = 54.93$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for avoiding bathrooms was significant: $F(4, 7155) = 99.48$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .053$. The univariate effect for avoiding locker rooms was significant: $F(4, 7155) = 43.04$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .023$.

147 To compare feeling unsafe by gender identity, chi-square tests were conducted. Unsafe because of sexual orientation: $\chi^2 = 108.33$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .12; unsafe because of gender expression: $\chi^2 = 973.99$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .36; unsafe because of gender: $\chi^2 = 1755.16$, $df = 4$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .48.

148 To compare experiences of harassment and assault by gender identity, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the three weighted variables (victimization based on: sexual orientation, gender expression, gender) as dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .17, $F(12, 21474) = 107.62$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 238.08$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .021$. The univariate effect for victimization due to gender expression was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 175.35$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .089$. The univariate effect for victimization due to gender was significant: $F(4, 7158) = 195.78$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .099$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

149 We compared percentages of students avoiding bathrooms and locker rooms at school with a multivariate analysis of variance where the weighted variables for victimization based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender were included as covariates. Differences were significant: Pillai's Trace = .06, $F(8, 14310) = 54.93$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for avoiding bathrooms was significant: $F(4, 7155) = 99.48$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .053$. The univariate effect for avoiding locker rooms was significant: $F(4, 7155) = 43.04$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .023$.

150 Kimmel, M. (2004). Masculinity as homophobia: fear, shame, and silence in the construction of gender identity. In P. F. Murphy (Ed.), *Feminism and masculinities* (pp. 182–199): New York: Oxford University Press.

151 Friedman, M. S., Koeske, G. F., Silvestre, A. J., Korr, W. S., & Sites, E. W. (2006). The impact of gender-role nonconforming behavior, bullying, and social support on suicidality among gay male youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 38(5), 621–623.

Grossman, A. H., D'Augelli, A. R., Salter, N., & Hubbard, S. (2005). Comparing gender expression, gender nonconformity, and parents' responses of female-to-male and male-to-female transgender youth: *Implications for counseling. Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, 1(1), 41–59.

Toomey, R. B., Ryan, C., Diaz, R. M., Card, N. A., & Russell, S. A. (2010). Gender-nonconforming lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth: School victimization and youth adult psychosocial adjustment. Developmental Psychology, 46(6), 1580–1589.

152 A measure of gender nonconformity was constructed for cisgender males and females and for transgender males and females by comparing their gender identity (male or female) to their reported level of femininity or masculinity. Female-identified students who reported their gender expression as anything other than "very," "mostly," or "somewhat" "feminine" were considered gender nonconforming, whereas male-identified students who reported their gender expression as anything other than "very," "mostly," or "somewhat" "masculine" were considered gender nonconforming. To compare level of gender conformity by gender identity for students who identified as male or female (including both transgender and cisgender), a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted: $F(3,6097) = 181.03$, $p<.001$.Pairwise differences considered at $p<.01$.

Note: Gender nonconformity was not calculated for other types of transgender students (i.,e., those who selected only "transgender"; transgender" and "male" and "female"; or "male-to-female" and "female-to-male"), genderqueer students, or students with other gender identities (e.g., "pangender"). All of these groups of students were excluded from analyses regarding gender nonconformity because their gender identity was outside the traditional binary of male/female, and therefore, it was not possible to calculate conformity based on gender expression. In addition, students who selected "none of these" for their gender expression were excluded in analyses regarding differences by gender nonconformity.

153 To compare gender expression by gender identity, a chi-square test was conducted: $\chi^2 = 1321.61$, $df = 36$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .17.

154 To compare feeling unsafe by gender nonconformity, chi-square tests were conducted; unsafe because of sexual orientation: $\chi^2 = 91.01$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .12; unsafe because of gender expression: $\chi^2 = 356.83$, $df = 1$, $p<.001$, Cramer's V = .24.

155 To compare experiences of victimization by gender nonconformity, a multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted with the two weighted variables (victimization based on: sexual orientation and gender expression) as dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .03, $F(2, 5910) = 89.01$, $p<.001$. The univariate effect for victimization due to sexual orientation was significant: $F(1, 5911) = 145.00$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .024$. The univariate effect for victimization due to gender expression was significant: $F(1, 5911) = 161.28$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .027$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

156 National Center for Homeless Education (2013). Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program: Data Collection Summary. Greensboro, NC. http://center.serve.org/nche/pr/data_comp.php.

157 Corliss, H. L., Goodenow, C. S., Nichols, L., & Austin, S. B. (2011). High burden of homelessness among sexual-minority adolescents: Findings from a representative Massachusetts high school sample. *American Journal of Public Health, 101*(9), 1683–1689.

Durso, L. E., & Gates, G. J. (2012). Serving our youth: Findings from a national survey of service providers working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute with True Colors Fund and The Palette Fund.

158 Corliss, H. L., Goodenow, C. S., Nichols, L., & Austin, S. B. (2011). High burden of homelessness among sexual-minority adolescents: Findings from a representative Massachusetts high school sample. *American Journal of Public Health, 101*(9), 1683–1689.

Ray, N. (2006). *Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth: An epidemic of homelessness*. New York: National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute, National Coalition for the Homeless.

159 Cutuli, J. J., Desjardins, C. D., Herbers, J. E., Long, J. D., Heistad, D., Chan, C. K., & Masten, A. S. (2013). Academic achievement trajectories of homeless and highly mobile students: Resilience in the context of chronic and acute risk. *Child Development*, 84(3), 841–857.

Obradović, J., Long, J. D., Cutuli, J. J., Chan, C. K., Hinz, E., Heistad, D., & Masten, A. S. (2009). Academic achievement of homeless and highly mobile children in an urban school district: Longitudinal evidence on risk, growth, and resilience. *Development and Psychopathology, 21*(02), 493–518.

Miller, P., Donahue, P., Este, D., & Hofer, M. (2004). Experiences of being homeless or at risk of being homeless among Canadian youths. *Adolescence, 39*(156), 735–755.

160 Ray, N. (2006). *Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth: An epidemic of homelessness.* New York: National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute, National Coalition for the Homeless.

161 In order to examine differences by living situation, a three-category housing status variable was created: 1) living with parent/guardian at parent/guardian home, 2) living with relatives, accompanied by parents/guardian or not, and 3) homeless. Based upon the definition of youth homeless from Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.), we counted students as homeless if they were living with friends — accompanied by parent/guardian or not; living in a group home; waiting for transitional placement; or living in any of the following: hotel/motel, streets, couch, car or van, park, campground, or abandoned building — accompanied by a parent/guardian or not. See http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg116.html. Students who indicated other living situations that were unclear as to their level of stability (e.g., living in parent/guardian's house but not with parents/guardians, living in own apartment) were excluded from these analyses. To compare grade point average (GPA) by housing status, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with housing status as the independent variable and GPA as the dependent variable. Results were significant: $F(2,7294) = 28.59$, at $p<.001$. Post hoc analyses indicated that students living with their parent/guardian in parent/guardian's house had higher GPAs than students living with relatives or students who were homeless. Differences between students living with relatives and students who were homeless were marginally significant. These differences held even when controlling for the region and locale (i.e., urbanicity) of a student's school and whether the student was living with their parent/guardian. There were no statistically significant differences between students living with relatives and homeless students. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

162 To compare educational aspirations by housing status, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with housing status as the independent variable and the educational aspiration variable as the dependent variable. Results were significant: $F(2,7254) = 13.689$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$. Post hoc analyses indicated that students living with their parent/guardian in the parent/guardian's house had higher aspirations than students living with relatives or students in least stable housing (i.e., who were homeless). These differences held even when controlling for region and locale (i.e., urbanicity) of a student's school, as well as for living with a parent/guardian. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

163 Based upon the definition of youth homelessness from Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.), students were considered homeless if they were living with friends — accompanied by parent/guardian or not; living in a group home; waiting for transitional placement; or living in any of the following: hotel/motel, streets, couch, car or van, park, campground, or abandoned building (see endnote 161 for more information).

164 Subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.). http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg116.html

165 U.S. Department of Education. (2013). Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program Profile downloaded from http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/ehcy_profile.pdf

166 Harris Interactive, & GLSEN. (2005). *From teasing to torment: School climate in America, A survey of teachers and students*. New York: Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network.

Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., S., P. R., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 285(16), 2094–2100.

Robers, S., Zhang, J., & Truman, J. (2012). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2011* (NCES 2012-002/NCJ 236021). National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC.

167 Only students who attended middle or high schools were included in this analysis. Students who attended elementary schools, K–12 schools, lower schools, upper schools, or another type of school were excluded.

168 To test differences between middle and high schools, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the anti-LGBT remarks variables (the three homophobic remarks variables, the negative remarks about gender expression, and negative remarks about transgender people variables) as the dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .009, $F(5, 6557) = 11.27$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were all significant — "gay" used in negative way: $F(1, 6551) = 34.13$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$; "no homo": $F(1, 6551) = 36.22$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$; other homophobic remarks: $F(1, 6551) = 17.06$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$; negative remarks about gender expression: $F(1, 6551) = 18.90$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$; negative remarks about transgender people: $F(1, 6551) = 19.09$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

169 To test differences between middle and high schools, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the two weighted victimization variables (victimization based on sexual orientation and based on gender expression) as the dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .02, $F(2, 6416) = 73.31$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were significant — sexual orientation: $F(1, 6417) = 146.59$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$; gender expression: $F(1, 6417) = 86.44$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

170 To compare differences between middle and high school, a series of independent sample t-tests (equal variances not assumed) was conducted with each resource and support variable as the dependent variable. (For the purposes of this analyses and similar analyses in this section regarding school differences in availability and resources and supports, we examined only whether students reported that their school had a comprehensive, i.e., fully enumerated, anti-bullying/harassment policy or not. Therefore, students without a comprehensive policy might have had a generic policy or no policy at all.) The results of the following analyses were significant — GSAs: $t(1347) = 42.93$, $p<.001$; supportive staff: $t(814) = 12.67$, $p<.001$; supportiveness of administration: $t(873) = 5.33$, $p<.001$; $p<.01$ inclusive curriculum: $t(1004) = 7.61$, $p<.001$; textbooks/other assigned readings: $t(1100) = 13.39$, $p<.001$; library resources: $t(889) = 9.04$, $p<.001$; access to Internet: $t(953) = 16.71$, $p<.001$. Having a comprehensive policy was marginally significant: $t(911) = 2.17$, $p<.05$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

171 Horn, S. S., & Nucci, L. (2003). The multidimensionality of adolescents' beliefs about and attitudes toward gay and lesbian peers in school. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 36(2), 136–147.

172 To test difference across school type, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the anti-LGBT remarks variables (the three homophobic remarks variables, the negative remarks about gender expression, and negative remarks about transgender people

variables) as the dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .06, $F(10, 15230) = 46.64$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were significant for the following remarks: "gay" used in negative way: $F(2, 7618) = 162.95$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .041$; "no homo": $F(2, 7618) = 65.60$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .017$; other homophobic remarks: $F(2, 7618) = 167.29$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .042$; negative remarks about transgender people: $F(2, 7618) = 19.74$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$. There were no statistically significant differences in negative remarks about gender expression. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

173 To test difference across school type, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the two weighted victimization variables (victimization based on sexual orientation and based on gender expression) as the dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .01, $F(4, 14896) = 11.28$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were significant — sexual orientation: $F(2, 7448) = 21.79$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .006$; gender expression: $F(2, 7448) = 15.21$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

174 To compare differences across school type, a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) was conducted with each resource and support variable as the dependent variable. The results of these analyses were significant at $p<.001$ — GSAs: $F(2,7667) = 74.01$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$; supportive staff: $F(2,7541) = 68.50$, $\eta_p^2 = .018$; supportiveness of administration: $F(2,7527) = 75.44$, $\eta_p^2 = .020$; comprehensive policy: $F(2,7673) = 20.81$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$; inclusive curriculum: $F(2,7663) = 77.78$, $\eta_p^2 = .020$; textbooks/other assigned readings: $F(2,7662) = 37.33$, $\eta_p^2 = .010$; library resources: $F(2,7657) = 14.12$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$; access to Internet: $F(2,7630) = 36.85$, $\eta_p^2 = .010$. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

175 Students were categorized into regions based on the state they were from — Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, DC; South: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia; Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin; West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

176 To test difference across region, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the anti-LGBT remarks variables (the three homophobic remarks variables and the negative remarks about gender expression, and negative remarks about transgender people variables) as the dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .03, $F(16, 23433) = 16.01$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were significant: "gay" used in negative way: $F(3, 7813) = 30.42$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .012$; "no homo": $F(3, 7813) = 62.38$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .023$; other homophobic remarks: $F(3, 7813) = 23.45$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .009$; negative remarks about gender expression: $F(3, 7813) = 3.84$, $p<.01$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$; negative remarks about transgender people: $F(3, 7813) = 13.37$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

177 To test difference across region, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the two weighted victimization variables (victimization based on sexual orientation and based on gender expression) as the dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .01, $F(6, 15274) = 17.33$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were significant — sexual orientation: $F(3, 7637) = 33.52$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$; gender expression: $F(3, 7637) = 13.65$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

178 To compare differences across regions a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) was conducted with each resource and support variable as the dependent variable. The results of these analyses were significant at $p<.001$ — GSAs: $F(3,7847) = 186.08$, $\eta_p^2 = .066$; supportive staff: $F(3,7717) = 115.74$, $\eta_p^2 = .043$; supportiveness of administration: $F(3,7698) = 95.01$, $\eta_p^2 = .036$; comprehensive policy: $F(3,7850) = 50.96$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$; inclusive curriculum: $F(3,7842) = 64.39$, $\eta_p^2 = .024$; textbooks/ other assigned readings: $F(3,7840) = 11.81$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$; library resources: $F(3,7833) = 19.19$, $\eta_p^2 = .007$; access to Internet: $F(3,7806) = 62.28$, $\eta_p^2 = .023$. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

179 Herek, G. M. (2002). Heterosexuals' attitudes toward bisexual men and women in the United States. *Journal of Sex Research*, 39(4), 264–274.

Klawitter, M., Antidiscrimination policies for sexual orientation, in New Research on LGBT Employment Discrimination 2011: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

180 Robers, S., Kemp, J., Rathbun, A., Morgan, R. E., & Snyder, T.D. (2014). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2013*(NCES 2013-036/NCJ 241446). National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC.

181 Goodenow, C., Szalacha, L., & Westheimer, K. (2006). School support groups, other school factors, and the safety of sexual minority adolescents. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43(5), 573–589.

Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., & Diaz, E. M. (2009). Who, what, where, when, and why: Demographic and ecological factors contributing to hostile school climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. Journal *of Youth and Adolescence*, 38, 976–988.

Palmer, N. A., Kosciw, J. G., & Bartkiewicz, M. J. (2012). *Strengths and silences: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students in rural and small town schools.* New York: Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network.

182 To test difference across school locale, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the anti-LGBT remarks variables (the three homophobic remarks variables and the negative remarks about gender expression, and negative remarks about transgender people variables) as the dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .03, $F(10, 15476) = 21.34$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were significant: "gay" used in negative way: $F(2, 7741) = 62.63$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .016$; "no homo": $F(2, 7734) = 23.50$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$; other homophobic remarks: $F(2, 7741) = 89.03$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$; negative remarks about gender expression: $F(2, 7741) = 15.67$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$; negative remarks about transgender people: $F(2, 7741) = 19.85$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

183 To test difference across school locale, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with the two weighted victimization variables (victimization based on sexual orientation and based on gender expression) as the dependent variables. Multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .02, $F(4, 15148) = 29.30$, $p<.001$. Univariate effects were significant — sexual orientation: $F(2, 7577) = 57.76$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .015$; gender expression: $F(2, 7577) = 29.29$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .008$. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

184 To compare differences across school locale, a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) was conducted with each resource and support variable as the dependent variable. The results of these analyses were significant at $p<.001$ — GSAs: $F(2,7801) = 279.51$, $\eta_p^2 = .067$; supportive staff: $F(2,7677) = 176.47$, $\eta_p^2 = .044$; supportiveness of administration: $F(2,7660) = 85.38$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$; comprehensive policy: $F(2,7810) = 25.33$, $\eta_p^2 = .006$; inclusive curriculum: $F(2,7798) = 79.47$, $\eta_p^2 = .020$; access to Internet: $F(2,7764) = 15.27$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$; textbooks/other assigned readings: $F(2,7798) = 21.55$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$. There were no locale differences in library resources. Post hoc comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

185 Although we have been collecting NSCS data since 1999, the first survey differed slightly from all subsequent surveys in the comprehensiveness of the survey questions and in the method so we did not include it in these over-time comparisons. Even though the survey is slightly modified with each installment to reflect new or emerging concerns about school climate for LGBT students, it has remained largely the same and has used the same data collection methods since 2001.

186 We did not include frequencies of hearing "no homo" or negative remarks about transgender people in these over time analyses because there were fewer than four time points (three for "no homo" and only one for negative remarks about transgender people), and thus, it would be more difficult or not possible to discern any trend in the data.

187 To test differences across years in use of anti-LGBT language and intervention in the use of this language, a series of one-way analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) was performed. Given certain demographic differences among the samples, we controlled

for participation in a community group or program for LGBT youth ("youth group"), age, racial/ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation, and method of taking the survey (paper vs. Internet version). These individual-level covariates were chosen based on preliminary analysis that examined what locational and school characteristics and personal demographics were most predictive of survey year membership. Because there were more cases in 2013 that were missing on demographic information, we also included a dummy variable controlling for missing demographics.

188 To test differences across years in the use of homophobic remarks, an ANCOVA was performed, controlling for demographic and method differences across the survey years. The main effect for Survey Year was significant, indicating mean differences across years: $F(6,33096) = 69.55$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .012$. Post-hoc group comparisons among years indicated 2013 was significantly lower than all years ($p < .001$).

189 To test differences across years in the use of expressions like "that's so gay," an ANCOVA was performed, controlling for demographic and method differences across the survey years. The main effect for Survey Year was significant, indicating mean differences across years: $F(6,33111) = 232.68$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Post-hoc group comparisons among years indicated 2013 was lower than all other years ($p < .001$).

190 To test differences across years in the use of negative remarks about gender expression from school staff, an ANCOVA was performed, controlling for demographic and method differences across the survey years. The mean of the two gender expression variables was computed to test across years. The main effect for Survey Year was significant, indicating mean differences across years: $F(5,32272) = 64.88$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Post-hoc group comparisons among years indicated 2013 was lower than all other years ($p < .001$).

191 To test differences across years in the number of students in school who make homophobic remarks, an ANCOVA was performed, controlling for demographic and method differences across the survey years. The main effect for Survey Year was significant: $F(6,33020) = 128.83$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Post-hoc group comparisons indicated that the mean for 2013 was lower than for all other years.

192 To test differences across years in the number of students in school who make negative remarks about gender expression, an ANCOVA was performed, controlling for demographic and method differences across the survey years as well as the frequency of hearing these remarks. The main effect for Survey Year was significant: $F(5,30796) = 11.52$. $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. Post-hoc group comparisons indicated that the mean in 2011 was significantly lower than all prior years.

193 To test differences across years in the frequency of hearing biased remarks from school staff, two ANCOVAs were performed controlling for demographic and method differences with the two dependent variables: frequency of hearing homophobic remarks and frequency of hearing negative remarks about gender expression from school staff. Regarding homophobic remarks, the main effect for Survey Year was significant: $F(6,33087) = 41.55$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .007$. Post-hoc group comparisons indicated that the mean in 2013 was significantly lower than those in all years but 2003. Regarding remarks about gender expression, the main effect for Survey Year was significant: $F(5,31133) = 15.90$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$. Post-hoc group comparisons indicated that the mean in 2013 was significantly lower only than all prior years.

194 Mean differences in intervention re: homophobic remarks was examined using analysis of covariance, controlling for demographic and method differences across the survey years. Regarding student intervention, the main effect for Survey Year was significant: $F(6,32974) = 8.00$, $p < 001$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$. The mean in 2013 was significantly higher than in 2011, lower than in 2007 and 2001, and not different than in 2009, 2005, and 2003. For staff intervention, the univariate F for survey year was also significant: $F(6,28345) = 7.09$, $p < 001$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$. The mean was significantly higher in 2013 than in 2011, 2009, 2005 and 2001, but not different from 2007 and 2003. However, the effect size for both effects was quite small.

195 Mean differences in intervention re: negative remarks about gender expression were examined using analysis of covariance, controlling for demographic and method differences across the survey years. Regarding student intervention, the main effect for Survey Year was significant: $F(5,30777) = 43.27$, $p < 001$. The mean in 2013 was not different from 2011 and significantly lower than all other prior years. For staff intervention, the univariate F for survey year was also significant: $F(5,24028) = 29.70$, $p < 001$. The mean was significantly higher in lower in 2013 than all prior years.

196 To test differences across years in the experiences of victimization based on sexual orientation, a multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted with the three harassment/assault based on sexual orientation variables as dependent variables. In order to account for differences in sampling methods across years, youth group participation, age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and survey method were used as covariates. The multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .035, $F(18,98445) = 65.38$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .012$. Univariate effects were considered at $p < .01$.

197 To test differences across years in the experiences of victimization based on gender expression, a multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted with the three harassment/assault based on gender expression variables as dependent variables. In order to account for differences in sampling methods across years, youth group participation, age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and survey method were used as covariates. The multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .022, $F(15,96390) = 39.00$, $p < .001$. Univariate effects were considered at $p < .01$.

198 To test differences across years, an analysis of covariance was conducted with the GSA variable as the dependent variable. In order to account for differences in sampling methods across years, youth group participation, age, race/ethnicity, and survey method were used as covariates. The univariate effect for survey year was significant: $F(6,33098) = 63.58$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .011$. Post-hoc group comparisons were considered at $p < .01$. The percentage in 2013 was higher than all prior years.

199 In 2001, students were asked a question about whether there were any supportive school personnel in their school. In 2003 and beyond, we asked a Likert-type question about the number of supportive school personnel. In order to include 2001 in the analyses, we created a comparable dichotomous variable for the other survey years. To test differences across all years, an analysis of covariance was conducted with the dichotomous variable as the dependent variable. In order to account for differences in sampling methods across years, youth group participation, age, race/ethnicity, and survey method were used as covariates. The univariate effect for survey year was significant: $F(6,32692) = 355.84$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .061$. The percentage in 2013 was greater than in all previous years. To test differences in the number of supportive school personnel (in 2003 and beyond), we tested the mean difference on the full variable. The univariate effect for survey year was significant: $F(5,31856) = 277.81$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .042$. Post-hoc group comparisons were considered at $p < .01$. The number of teachers was higher in 2013 than in all prior years.

200 To test differences across years in curricular resources, a multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted with four dependent variables (inclusion of LGBT-related topics in textbooks, Internet access to LGBT-related information/resources through school computers, positive curricular representations of LGBT topics, LGBT-related library materials). In order to account for differences in sampling methods across years, youth group participation, age, race/ethnicity, and survey method were used as covariates. The multivariate results were significant: Pillai's Trace = .023, $F(24,131232) = 31.73$ $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .006$. Univariate effects indicated significant difference across years for all four resources — curricular representations: $F(6,32808) = 56.84$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$; textbooks: $F(6,32808) = 36.72$ $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .007$; library: $F(6,32808) = 10.67$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$; Internet access: $F(6,32808) = 50.25$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .009$. Post-hoc comparisons by survey year were considered at $p < .01$.

201 To test differences across years in the percentage of students reporting a school harassment/assault policy, three ANCOVAs were performed controlling for demographic and method differences with the three dependent variables: any type of policy, partially enumerated policy and comprehensive policy. The main effect for Survey Year for any type of policy was significant, indicating mean differences across years: $F(5,32243) = 441.59$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .064$. The main effect for Survey Year for having a partially enumerated policy was also statistically significant $F(4,31392) = 20.28$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$. The main effect for Survey Year for having a comprehensive policy was also statistically significant $F(4,31392) = 20.52$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$. Post-hoc group comparisons among years were considered at $p < .01$ for all three analyses.

202 A variety of strategies were used to target LGBT adolescents via Facebook ads: ads were sent to 13 to 18 year-olds who indicated on their profile that they were a female seeking other females or a male seeking other males; ads were also shown to 13 to 18 year-olds who used the words lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender somewhere in their profile. In order to be included in the final sample, respondents had to have identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, or as a sexual orientation or gender that would fall under the LGBT "umbrella" (e.g., queer, genderqueer).

203 Further research is necessary to identify the most effective and inclusive ways to asses transgender identity among general population of adolescents. See: Greytak, E., Gill, A., Conron, K., Matthews, P.A., Scout, Reisner, S. Herman, J.L., Viloria, H., & Tamar-Mattis, A. (2014). Chapter 4: Identifying transgender and other gender minority respondents in population-based surveys: Special consideration for adolescents, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and intersex status. In J.L. Herman (ed.), *Best practices for asking questions to identify transgender and other gender minority respondents on population-based surveys* (pp 29–43). Los Angeles, CA: the Williams Institute.

204 Hispanic/Latino and Middle Eastern/Arab American categories were considered ethnicities as opposed to races, and thus students selecting either of those categories were coded as such, regardless of race (e.g., student selecting "African-American" and "Latino/a" were coded as "Latino/a").

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