



Cultivating Respect (Safe Schools for All): Learning Session Overview

Background:

While bullying and harassment have been serious problems in U.S. schools for many years, it wasn't until a rash of bullying-related suicides began making mainstream news that many people took notice. Sometimes considered by some to be a common rite of passage for youth, the fact is that the effects of bullying and harassment have been devastating for some youth, others have experienced lower student achievement, attendance, and self-esteem as a result of the incidents. Notably, many of these incidents are tied to anti-LGBT attitudes and behaviors.

PFLAG's Cultivating Respect Safe Schools for All learning program provides participants with the real facts about bullying and harassment today through stories illustrating common themes and outcomes, research and statistics on the prevalence and manifestations of the behaviors, and real-world responses for parents to use at home, in schools, and on the larger national stage.

Every student deserves a safe school – this training helps people start making safe schools for more youth.

Learning Session Outline and Objectives:

- Discuss the most common beliefs about bullying and harassment in schools and understand that the many different opinions about this issue are what makes addressing it effectively a challenge.
- Provide participants with some basic definitions that will help them understand some of the sources of bullying and harassment (e.g., sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression).
- Learn about the paramount importance of properly defining bullying and harassment in schools and connect this definition to better outcomes in reducing bullying and harassment.
- Review several cases of bullying and harassment in U.S. schools and use the stories to illustrate the sources of bullying and harassment and underscore the theme that bullying and harassment are about people's perceptions of difference.
- Connect the prevalence of anti-LGBT beliefs and attitudes to much of the bullying and harassment in schools today.
- Offer five key statistics about bullying and harassment that provide participants with important research to discuss the issue in schools.
- Discuss the ways to start cultivating respect in schools:
 - At home: How parents can talk about the issue with children, how to “bullyproof kids”, how to identify signs of bullying, and what to immediately do if you think your child is being bullied.
 - In schools: How to assess the way your school district approaches and responds to this issue, how to make the case to educators, administrators, and school boards that this must be addressed, and how to create visible allies in schools to end the cycle of bullying and harassment.

- “Extra credit” for participants:
 - Learn more about the “Claim Your Rights” program that can help students, parents, and educators report unremediated bullying and harassment with help from the Department of Education.
 - Learn more about the safe schools laws in your state and how you can help improve their effectiveness.

Session Length: 90 minutes

Target Audience: General audience, no experience with LGBT issues required. This session appeals to a broad-based audience and is often effective in engaging non-LGBT participants.

Participant Materials Provided: All participants will receive PFLAG National’s *Cultivating Respect* booklet, collateral safe schools materials, and will be provided with a custom URL to link to the research and resources cited in the training.

For more information on this session, contact Jamie Henkel, Equality and Diversity Partnerships Manager, by e-mailing jhenkel@pflag.org or call (202) 467-8180 ext. 210.