

DOJ and ED Release New LGBTQ-Inclusive Report on School Safety

Yesterday, Secretary DeVos stood in front of Congress and said that she believed that schools that allow discrimination on the basis of race, sexual orientation, disability, or gender identity should still be subsidized with taxpayer funds.

In a report released today, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Education (ED) provided statistics that underscore the devastating, real-life consequences of discrimination in schools. The report, [*Indicators of School Crime and Safety*](#), gives us a clearer picture of the experience of LGBTQ young people in schools, including in a spotlight section – *Student Victimization and Risk Behaviors by Sexual Orientation*. Unfortunately, small sample sizes mean that the report does not currently have statistics on transgender young people, but there were a few statistics related to gender identity discrimination, harassment and violence. Key findings in the report include:

- LGB students report higher rates of bullying on school property than their heterosexual peers overall (34% vs. 19%), as well as among boys (26% vs. 15%) and girls (37% vs. 23%).
- LGB students report higher rates of cyber bullying than their heterosexual peers overall (28% vs. 14%), among boys (22% vs. 9%) and among girls (30% vs. 21%).
- LGB and questioning students are much more likely to have been in a physical fight than their heterosexual peers.
- LGB students – and especially girls – are more likely to have drunk alcohol or smoked marijuana in the last 30 days than their heterosexual peers.
- Race (35%) and sexual orientation (25%) were the motivating factors most frequently associated with hate crimes on campuses in 2014. Gender identity, religion, gender, ethnicity, and disability also motivated a significant number of campus hate crimes that year.
- LGB students report higher rates of being threatened or injured with a weapon than their heterosexual peers; girls that identify as lesbian or bisexual also report higher rates of carrying a weapon than their heterosexual peers.
- The percentage of public schools reporting harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity decreased in 2013-2014 from its level in 2009-2010.

These statistics are a harrowing reminder that violence and harassment aimed at LGBTQ young people remains a national problem. Our fight for equity is gaining ground, but our young people continue to be targeted based on race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, gender, ethnicity, and disability.

We hope that advocates will use these statistics to hold their elected officials accountable for the decision to hand control of our schools to a woman who supports discrimination in schools.

The National LGBTQ Task Force worked with colleague organizations to ensure that the surveys from which the statistics in this report were drawn included questions on sexual orientation and gender identity as well as measures that capture the lived experience of LGBTQ youth. Without advocacy on data collection, our understanding of how to create meaningful change for LGBTQ young people would be more limited, and our ability to advocate for change would be narrower. To support this advocacy, or for more information on campaigns like this, [Donate](#) or [Sign up](#) for our mailing list.