

ATTACHMENT "I"

Accommodation Review Committee Presenters' Package

The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board values public input from students, parents, and stakeholders during Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) meetings. Your assistance in providing the following information as part of your request to present to the ARC is appreciated. Your written application should be brief and should adhere to the following format.

1. **PURPOSE** Please provide one or two statements outlining the topic of your presentation.

PARN-Your Community AIDS Resource Network values partnerships with PCVS students and teachers.

2. **RATIONALE**
Provide background facts and information which will assist the ARC with understanding the issue.

PCVS GSA & the Integrated Arts Program help to address homophobia, isolation and inclusion for LGBT students, their allies, staff and the greater community.

3. **PRESENTATION CONTENT**

WRITTEN SUBMISSION:

Letter and reference documents

4. **AUTHORIZATION** Presenter: Kim Dolan

Telephone: 705-749-9110

Address: 302-159 King Street

Fax: 705-749-6310

E-mail: kim@parn.ca

In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, I

understand that this completed document may be printed with the public meeting agenda, posted to the Board's website and made available to the media.

Please note that the signature of the parent/guardian is required for all presenters under the age of 18.

Signature:



Title: Executive Director

I am speaking as an individual _____

OR

Written submission on behalf of : PARN-Your Community AIDS Resource Network/Rainbow Youth Program

Name of Organization

5. APPENDICES

Please provide any attachment to which you have referred in your report and which you would like the ARC to consider. These may include charts, tables, forms, lists or supporting documents. Please return your completed Presenters' Package to:

Cheryl Gzik, Administrative Assistant
Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
P.O. Box 719 1994 Fisher Drive
Peterborough Ontario
K9J 7A1
Fax 705-742-7281 E-mail cheryl_gzik@kprdsb.ca



March 4, 2011

Peterborough Needs PCVS

Addressing HIV prevention and providing support for those with HIV is only successful when our communities work together to address the drivers of the epidemic locally and globally.

For over 20 years PARN has worked with community partners to provide evidence-based HIV prevention/education, and support programs. PARN has enjoyed a successful partnership with PCVS faculty and students to support the development of innovative approaches to address homophobia and HIV risk prevention.

PARN's Rainbow Youth Program is guided by a Coalition whose members consist of youth, representatives of organizations and individuals who support LGBT youth and understand the importance of **education, outreach and advocacy**. The leadership, faculty and students at PCVS were amongst the first in this area to understand the importance of creating a Gay/Straight Alliance and establishing safe spaces and respectful, inclusive environments for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender youth and their allies.

PCVS has brought to life the spirit of the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board's commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

In addition to the GSA, one particularly successful endeavour was the 2008 'Coming Out Proud' performance created by Grade 9 students of the Integrated Arts Program (see [Peterborough Examiner](#) article below). The project came about after PARN's Rainbow Youth worker presented an anti-homophobia workshop to a drama class. Teacher, Tracy Hughes led the students through a process that created a performance with a powerful message. The students spent over 150 hours brainstorming, researching, and writing, that resulted in "Coming Out Proud", a community theatre production. (<http://www.peterboroughexaminer.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?archive=true&e=1595089>).

Not only did the students present 'Coming Out Proud' at the school, they also took it on the road to a regional Opening Doors Conference, and to a training event at OPP Headquarters in Orillia. The students were nominated for a Peterborough Civic Award (by a former graduate of PCVS) and received the Cultural Betterment Award.

As leaders in our community of schools, PCVS is creating future community leaders. Leaders who are well prepared to respond to our increasingly diverse city and create inclusive communities.

We are looking forward to a continued partnership with current and future members of the PCVS community.

Sincerely, Kim Dolan, Executive Director

Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network





Background

Toronto Teen Survey¹

Due to a number of biological, social, developmental, and behavioural factors, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) disproportionately affect adolescents. Recent data indicate a resurgence of STIs in this population, along with an increase in the reported number of HIV infections. Research indicates an alarming gap in the sexual health knowledge of youth, particularly younger teenagers. Canadian youth lack comprehensive knowledge of risk factors associated with unprotected sexual activity and the necessary skills required to ensure the protection of their sexual health. The early teen years are a critical time to provide youth with accessible sexual health education and prevention services. This is the period where first sexual experiences often occur, and where behavioural risk for HIV or STIs emerges.

Forging Safer Learning Environments: Addressing Homophobic Bullying in Schools²

LGBT students in rural areas, typically characterized by conservative community and family environments and lack of anonymity, tend to endure more hostile school climates than do those in suburban or urban areas. Rural LGBT youth are more apt to have fewer resources and to feel a greater sense of isolation than their urban counterparts.

“Racism, religious intolerance, homophobia and gender-based violence are still evident in our communities and – unfortunately – in our schools,” write the authors of a 2006 Ministry of Education report outlining an Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy for the Ontario school system.

¹ <http://www.utoronto.ca/cuhi/research/urbanyouthrig.html>

² http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/WW_safe_learning_environments.pdf

Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network





KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD POLICY STATEMENT³

Equity, valuing diversity and inclusion aim to correct the imbalance of power that has historically marginalized particular groups by respecting the dignity and humanity of all, supporting the development of human potential, and enabling groups and individuals to contribute fully to society.

The Board recognizes that groups that have historically been disadvantaged include, but are not limited to, Aboriginal, racial, ethnocultural and faith communities, women, persons with disabilities, lesbian, gay, two-spirited, bisexual and transgender people, as well as communities of lower socio-economic status. The Board also acknowledges that emergent biases, stereotypes and prejudices will have a discriminatory impact on other individuals and groups.

Equity encourages fairness by requiring that we recognize and strive to eliminate the unfair biases and prejudices that limit our individual and collective freedom. Practising equity involves proactively eradicating attitudes, actions, structures and systems that result in discrimination and exclusion. Diversity calls on us to value both ourselves and one another by respecting our unique qualities. We practise equity when we engage all members of society and esteem the contributions of groups and individuals.

³ <http://kprcontentlibrary.kprdsb.ca:8080/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1068/B-3.2%20Equity%2c%20Diversity%20and%20Inclusion.pdf>



PCVS Coming Out Proud Play⁴

By JAMES NEELEY Examiner Staff Writer

In poignant, at times offensive language, a stage production by PCVS theatre students tackled homophobia to inspire tolerance. The Coming Out Proud production, developed and written by the Grade 9 theatre class, took an honest and powerful look at the controversial topic. The students used first-hand accounts of homophobia from classmates and friends to help develop the script. “It was tough getting into it,” said Claire Foran. “We had to make sure what we were saying was true,” said Claire Menendez. The performance tackled bullying, the struggle to come out — both for homosexuals and straight students — workplace discrimination and suicide. “You can’t change people. You can only hope to change the way they think,” said teacher Tracey Hughes. Many may give the play an R rating, but the strong language was needed, Hughes said. “(The students) struggled with being allowed to use the language,” she said. “So we worked hard to make them understand what it feels like to be called fag or queer, what it’s like to hear it and say it,” she said. “They got all sides of the experience.” “We really had to get used to using the language,” said Katie Walsh. But the experience was also a lot of fun and one the students really valued, she said. The performance was inspiring for many of the more than 40 people who took in yesterday’s performance in the PCVS auditorium. “I admire you all. What courage it takes to do this,” said one woman identified as Jen. “Thank you so much for doing this,” said another crowd member. “You guys are so brave.” “I wish this would have been around when I was in school,” said another spectator. Despite the harsh language, a parent who took in the performance suggested it be shown to elementary schoolchildren. The PCVS theatre class also performed the play at the Say What? youth conference in Oshawa on May 24. The school plans to develop a film version of the performance and publish the script for other schools to use in their curriculum, Hughes said. “When we first started there were a lot of ups and downs and crying at the end of class. But once we pulled it together it really feels like we made a difference,” Menendez said. The students have gone through a journey in their own lives during the production, Hughes said, explaining it forced them to confront homophobia, discuss it with classmates and parents. “We have helped make the school safer,” she said. “And cool to be who you are.” jneeley@peterboroughexaminer.com

⁴ <http://www.peterboroughexaminer.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?archive=true&e=1595089>

Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network





YOUR COMMUNITY AIDS
RESOURCE NETWORK

The First National Climate Survey on Homophobia in Canadian Schools ⁵

Phase One Report - March 2009

Executive Summary

High school students are exposed to homophobic incidents that range from hearing “gay” used as a synonym for “stupid” or “worthless” to insulting and assaulting students because of their sexual or transgender identity or their perceived sexual or transgender identity. This report discusses the results of a national survey of Canadian high school students undertaken in order to identify the forms and extent of their experiences of homophobic incidents at school and measures being taken by schools to combat this common form of bullying.

Phase one of the study involved surveying almost 1700 students from across Canada through two methods: individual online participation and in-school sessions conducted in four school boards. This report analyzes the data from individual online participation. The study has been funded by Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, the University of Winnipeg, and SVR/CIHR.

The lack of a solid Canadian evidence base has been a major impediment faced by educators who need to understand the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students in order to respond appropriately and to assure the school community that homophobic bullying is neither rare nor harmless but a major problem that needs to be addressed. The information presented here has come from young people themselves through the many hundreds of students, LGBTQ, questioning, and straight, who took the time to make their voices heard by completing our survey. We reached them by advertising the survey widely through news releases and direct contact with organizations across the country that had LGBTQ youth memberships.

The survey itself was a fifty-four item questionnaire made available online and in print, and consisting mostly of multiple-choice questions of three kinds: demographic (e.g., age, province, gender and sexual identity), experiences (e.g. hearing gay used as insult, being verbally harassed), and institutional responses (e.g., staff intervention, inclusive safe-school policies). Quantitative data were tested for statistical significance through bivariate analysis that compared the responses of various groups of students (e.g., LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ, LGB and transgender, current versus past).

Key Findings

Unsafe spaces

- Three-quarters of LGBTQ students feel unsafe in at least one place at school, such as change rooms, washrooms, and hallways. Half of straight students agree that at least one part of their school is unsafe for LGBTQ students.
- Transgender students are especially likely to see these places as unsafe (87%).

⁵ <http://egale.ca/index.asp?lang=E&menu=4&item=1401>

Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network





**YOUR COMMUNITY AIDS
RESOURCE NETWORK**

•LGBTQ students see more places as unsafe for LGBTQ people than do straight students, and transgender students most of all (4, 2, and 5 unsafe spaces, respectively).

Homophobic Comments

•Three-quarters of all participating students reported hearing expressions such as “that’s so gay” every day in school.

•Half heard remarks like “faggot”, “queer”, “lezbo”, and “dyke” daily. Over half of LGBTQ students, compared to a third of non-LGBTQ reported hearing such remarks daily.

•LGBTQ students were significantly more likely than non-LGBTQ to notice comments about boys not acting masculine enough or feminine enough every day.

•A third of transgender participants heard derogatory comments daily about boys not being masculine enough, compared to a quarter of LGB students. Transgender students were more than twice as likely as LGB students to report hearing comments about girls not being feminine enough.

•LGBTQ students were more likely than non-LGBTQ individuals to report that staff never intervened when homophobic comments were made

•Half of transgender students reported that staff never intervened when homophobic comments were made, compared to 34.1% of LGB respondents.

•Current students were even more likely than past students to hear expressions like “that’s so gay” in school.

•Current students were also more likely than past students to hear homophobic comments from other students every day.

One sign of progress:

Current students were significantly less likely than past students to report that school staff never intervened.

Victimization

•Six out of ten LGBTQ students reported being verbally harassed about their sexual orientation.

•Nine out of ten transgender students, six out of ten LGB students, and three out of ten straight students were verbally harassed because of their expression of gender.

•One in four LGB students had been physically harassed about their sexual orientation.

•Almost two in five transgender students and one in five LGB reported being physically harassed due to their expression of gender.

Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network





**YOUR COMMUNITY AIDS
RESOURCE NETWORK**

- Two-thirds of LGBTQ students and just under half of non-LGBTQ have seen homophobic graffiti at school. One in seven LGBTQ students had been named in the graffiti.
- Over half the LGBTQ students had rumours or lies spread about their sexual orientation at school, compared to one in ten non-LGBTQ.
- One third of LGBTQ participants reported harassment through text-messaging or on the internet.

Impacts

- Three-quarters of LGBTQ students and 95% of transgender students felt unsafe at school, compared to one-fifth of straight students.
- Over a quarter of LGBTQ students and almost half of transgender students had skipped school because they felt unsafe, compared to less than a tenth of non-LGBTQ.
- Many LGBTQ students would not be comfortable talking to their teachers (four in ten), their principal (six in ten), or their coach (seven in ten) about LGBTQ issues.
- Only one in five LGBTQ students could talk to a parent very comfortably about LGBTQ issues. Three-quarters could talk to a close friend.
- Over half of LGBTQ students did not feel accepted at school, and almost half felt they could not be themselves, compared to one-fifth of straight students.
- Transgender students (over a third) were twice as likely as LGB students to strongly agree that they sometimes feel very depressed about their school that they do not belong there, and four times as likely as straight students.

Institutional Responses

- Fewer than half of participants knew whether their school had a policy for reporting homophobic incidents.
- Of those, only one-third believed there was such a policy.

LGBTQ students who believed their schools have anti-homophobia policies were much more likely than other LGBTQ students...

- to feel their school community was supportive (one half compared to fewer than one-fifth),
- to feel comfortable talking to a counsellor (one half compared to fewer than one-third), and to feel comfortable talking to classmates (over a third compared to one-fifth),
- to believe their school was becoming less homophobic,
- to hear fewer homophobic comments and to say staff intervene more often,

Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network





YOUR COMMUNITY AIDS
RESOURCE NETWORK

- to report homophobic incidents to staff and their parents,
- to feel attached to their school.

LGBTQ students who believed their schools have anti-homophobia policies were much less likely than other LGBTQ students...

- to have had lies and rumours spread about them at school or on the Internet,
- to have had property stolen or damaged,
- to feel unsafe at school,
- to have been verbally or physically harassed.

The results were similar for students who believed that their school districts had such policies.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This survey has provided statistically-tested confirmation of what LGBTQ students and their allies have known for some time: that despite Canada's leadership on human rights for LGBTQ people, a great deal of verbal and physical homophobic harassment goes on in Canadian schools, that they are more likely to be aware of it than are other students who are not its main targets, and that the response has more often than not been inadequate.

The survey also shows, however, that the situation is much improved where schools and school divisions have developed safe-schools policies and procedures that explicitly address homophobia and made them known to students. In such schools, LGBTQ students are less likely to hear homophobic comments or to be targeted by verbal or physical harassment, they are more likely to report it to staff and parents when they are, and staff is more likely to intervene. They feel safer, more accepted, and more attached to their school.

Developing inclusive safe schools policies and making them known to students are not the complete solution. However, this survey has identified big differences between schools with and schools without inclusive policies.

We therefore strongly recommend the following:

1. That schools implement anti-homophobia policies and make these well known to students, parents, administration, and all staff as a positive part of their commitment to making schools safe.
2. That divisions develop anti-homophobia policies to provide institutional authority and leadership for schools. Although our analysis showed that students are less likely to know about division-level policies, it would of course be helpful to principals to know that their school-level efforts had strong divisional endorsement in the form of official policy at that level.

Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network





**YOUR COMMUNITY AIDS
RESOURCE NETWORK**

- 3. That schools strongly support the efforts of students to start Gay-Straight Alliance clubs (GSAs).**
- 4. That in schools where students have not come forward, administration should ask teachers to offer to work with students to start a GSA club. It is not safe to assume that LGBTQ students would prefer to go through high school isolated from their peers and teachers.**
- 5. That provincial Ministries of Education mandate the inclusion of homophobia in safe schools policies and programs, including ..., along with steps for the implementation of the policies, to provide support and motivation to divisional and school staff.**

Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network





Serving the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland & Peterborough Counties

159 King Street, Suite 302, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8 www.parn.ca
TTY/Voice 705-749-9110 Toll Free 1-800-361-2895 Fax 705-749-6310

Member of Canadian AIDS Society & Ontario AIDS Network

