



INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES: RELEVANT RESEARCH

ADDRESSING INCLUSION, RESPECT AND SAFETY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

- Schools which are characterized as safe encourage students to talk openly about safety, treat students with equal respect, help children feel safe expressing their feelings, and involve families in meaningful ways.¹¹
- Schools benefit when students are encouraged to consider the power of bystanders when bullying occurs. In one study, when bystanders *intervened*, they were able to stop the bullying two out of three times.¹²
- Students who are bullied at school are more than twice as likely to report a suicide attempt as students who are not bullied.¹³
- Students who are exposed to racially diverse and integrated settings are less likely to harbor stereotypes, as they grow older.¹⁴
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual students who attend racially diverse high schools report feeling safer than did those who attend more homogeneous schools.¹⁵
- According to the US Department of Education, a major source of conflict in schools stems from perceived or actual bias and unfair treatment of students because of ethnicity, gender, race, social class, religion, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, and physical appearance. These biases may be expressed or perceived by staff and/or students.¹⁶
- Both children who are targeted and children who exhibit bullying behavior have lower academic achievement in school.¹⁷

DIVERSE FAMILIES ARE IN ALL SCHOOLS

- More than 2.4 million fathers are the primary caregivers for their children.¹⁸
- 6.5 million children live with grandparents.¹⁹

¹¹ U.S. Department of Education, "Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools," 1998. Available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep/gtss.html>.

¹² Joseph A. Dake, James H. Price & Susan K. Telljohann, "The Nature and Extent of Bullying at School," *Journal of School Health*, May 2003 (pp.173 – 180). The data showed that bystanders were present 90 percent of the time, and intervened: 20 percent of the time. The students who intervened were able to stop the bullying two-thirds of the time.

¹³ Massachusetts Department of Education, "2005 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey," January 2007 (p. 42). Available at: www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/hprogrms/vrbs/05.

¹⁴ A. S. Wells & R.L. Crain, "Perpetuation Theory and the Long-Term Effects of School Desegregation," *Review of Educational Research*, 1994 (pp.531-555)

¹⁵ Carol Goodenow, Laura Szalacha & Kim Westheimer, "School Support Groups, Other School Factors and the Safety of Sexual Minority Adolescents," *Psychology in the Schools*, 2006 (pp. 573-589).

¹⁶ U.S. Department of Education, "Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools," 1998. Available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep/gtss.html>.

¹⁷ Joseph A. Dake, James H. Price & Susan K. Telljohann, "The Nature and Extent of Bullying at School," *Journal of School Health*, May 2003 (pp. 173 – 180).

¹⁸ Rose M. Kreider, U.S. Census Bureau, "Living Arrangements of Children: 2004," Current Population Reports, February 2008 (p. 7). Available at: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/p70-114.pdf>

¹⁹ Rose M. Kreider, U.S. Census Bureau, "Living Arrangements of Children: 2004," Current Population Reports, February 2008 (p. 12). Available at: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/p70-114.pdf>

- Almost 3 million children identify as being of more than one race.²⁰
- More than 1.5 million children are adopted. 21
- 17% of all children live in a blended family.²²
- Children who are raised with same-sex parents come from diverse households.
 - More than half of the African-American same-sex couples in California are raising children.²³
 - Hispanic same-sex couples are more than two to three times as likely to be raising children as white non-Hispanic same-sex couples²⁴
 - In nearly every US County, there are gay and lesbian headed households according to the U.S. Census.²⁵ In heavily rural states, such as Mississippi, South Dakota and Alaska, households headed by same-sex couples are more likely to have children than same-sex households in other states.²⁶

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IS LINKED TO ACCEPTANCE OF SELF AND OTHERS

- Students who develop social skills at an early age show greater levels of academic achievement.²⁷
- Students who feel they are more supported in school and at home generally have higher achievement levels.²⁸
- Students who experience acceptance at school are more highly motivated, engaged in learning and committed to school.²⁹
- In schools with a greater sense of community, students have higher educational aspirations and are more academically motivated.³⁰

²⁰ Women's Educational Media, "That's a Family! Statistics on U.S. Families." Available at: http://www.groundspark.org/press/thatafamily_kit/wef_statistics_kit.html. As cited by Jane Fritsch in *The New York Times*, May 20, 2001.

²¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "Facts for Features: Special Edition: National Adoption Month," September 20, 2004. Available at: www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/002683.html

²² Rose M. Kreider, U.S. Census Bureau, "Living Arrangements of Children: 2004," Current Population Reports, February 2008 (p. 10). Available at: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/p70-114.pdf>

²³ Gary Gates & Bradley Sears, Williams Project at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law, "Black Same-Sex Couples in California," September 2005. Available at: www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/AfricanAmericanReport.pdf

²⁴ Jason Cianciotto, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute & the National Latino/a Coalition for Justice, "Hispanic and Latino Same-Sex Couple Households in the United States: A Report from the 2000 Census," 2005 (p. 52). Available at: http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/HispanicLatino_households

²⁵ Judith Bradford, Kirsten Barrett & Julie A Honnold, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, "2000 Census and Same-Sex Households: A User's Guide," October 2002 (p.4) Available at: http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/census_full

²⁶ Sean Cahill, Mitra Ellen & Sarah Tobias, "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Parents and Their Children," excerpt from *Family Policy: Issues Affecting Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Families*, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Jan. 22, 2003. Available at: http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/family_policy

²⁷ G.V. Caprara, C. Barbaranelli, C. Patorelli, A. Bandura & P. Zimbardo, "Prosocial Foundations of Children's Academic Achievement," *Psychological Science*, 2000 (pp.302-306)

²⁸ SAMHSA's National Mental Health Information Center, "Take Action Against Bullying." 2003. See <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SVP-0056/>

²⁹ K. F. Osterman (2000). Students' need for belonging in the school community. *Review of Educational Research* 70(3), (pp. 323-367)

³⁰ A. Bryk & M. Driscoll, "The High School as Community: Contextual Influences and Consequences for Students and Teachers," National Center on Effective Secondary Schools, 1988. D. Solomon, V. Battistich, M. Watson, E. Schaps, & C. Lewis, "A Six-District Study of Educational Change: Direct and Mediated Effects of the Child

- Students who are victimized at school and children who exhibit bullying behavior have lower academic achievement.³¹
- Among students in grades K-5, the subtle activation of negative stereotypes hurt performance on quantitative tasks while the subtle activation of positive stereotypes improved the students' performance.³²
- Research has shown that children of same-sex couples do just as well on a diverse array of assessments, including personal, family and school adjustments, as children living with heterosexual parents.³³

ANTI-GAY NAME-CALLING AFFECTS ALL STUDENTS

- In a nationwide survey, children said they feared anti-gay harassment more than any other kind of name-calling.³⁴
- For every gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender student who reported being harassed, four straight students said they were harassed for being perceived to be gay or lesbian.³⁵
- A study of middle-school students in Central Illinois found that being called anti-gay names significantly predicts higher levels of trauma for students regardless of sexual orientation. Such name-calling may lead to anxiety, depression, personal distress, and a lower sense of school belonging.³⁶
- In the 28 random shootings in U.S. schools between 1982 and 2001, nearly all the boys who committed the violence had stories of being constantly bullied, teased and "gay-baited" — not because they were gay, but because they were different from the other boys: shy, artistic, theatrical, musical, non-athletic or "geekish."³⁷

Development Project," *Social Psychology of Education*, 2000 (pp. 3–51). As cited in: Eric Schaps, National Association of Elementary School Principals, "Building Community: The Neglected Element in School Renewal," September 2000. Available at: www.devstu.org/about/articles.html.

³¹ Joseph A. Dake, James H. Price & Susan K. Telljohann, "The Nature and Extent of Bullying at School" *Journal of Schools Health*, May 2003 (pp. 173-180)

³² Nalini Ambady, et. Al., "Stereotype Susceptibility in Children: Effects of Identity Activation on Quantitative Performance," *Psychological Science*,

³³ Jennifer Wainright, Stephen Russell & Charlotte Patterson, "Psychosocial Adjustment, School Outcomes and Romantic Relationships of Adolescents with Same-Sex Parents," *Child Development*, November/December 2004 (pp. 1886-1898).

³⁴ Joseph A. Drake, James H. Price & Susan K. Telljohann, "The Nature and Extent of Bullying at School," *Journal of School Health*, May 2003 (pp. 173-180)

³⁵ Beth Reis & Elizabeth Saewyc, Safe Schools Coalition of Washington, "83,000 Youth: Selected Findings of Eight Population Based Studies," 1999 (p.7) Available at: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/83000youth.pdf>

³⁶ V. Paul Poteat and Dorothy L. Espelage, "Predicting Psychosocial Consequences of Homophobic Victimization in Middle School Students," *The Journal of Early Adolescence* (May 2007; Vol. 27, No. 2; pp.175 -191). Summary at: www.newswise.com/articles/view/533980/

³⁷ Michael S. Kimmel & Matthew Mahler, "Adolescent Masculinity, Homophobia and Violence: Random School Shootings, 1982-2001," *American Behavioral Scientist*, June 2003 (pp. 1439-1458).