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High Contrast

a photo-narrative exhibit by youth and for youth

click on image to enter gallery

If you are part of a GSA in the Bay Area and are interested in bringing the High Contast exhibit to your school, email highcontrast@gsanetwork.org [1].

Artists
Rachel Bolden-Kramer
Tiffany Holder
Carrie Hoskins
William Lam
Spencer Peterson
Marija Rasma Sinats
Kaiya Wertheim-Knapp

What is this exhibit all about?

A group of LGBTQQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning) and straight ally youth created High Contrast to be used as an organizing tool for GSAs and a curriculum tool for teachers. This exhibit uses art as a means for change -- to show people what they may not choose to see, to incite dialogue, and to inspire transformation. High Contrast was created to help make educational environments and society as a whole safe and supportive for everyone.

Who created High Constrast

Through a collaboration of the Gay Straight Alliance Network, LYRIC (Lavendar Youth Recreation and Information Center) and the Wedge Program of the San Francisco Department of Health a group of high school students from the Bay Area came together to use photography to

express their experiences and convictions. These students, of different races, sexualities, genders, and class backgrounds, have shared their vision and voice in the hope that people will see and hear them.

What are the goals of the exhibit?

- To make participating schools safer for students regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity.
- To combat negative stereotypes and misperceptions of LGBTQ people.
- To represent youth who are traditionally left out of the media.
- To provide strong, empowering, and diverse portrayals of LGBTQ youth and their allies.
- To challenge the assumptions we make about people.
- To inspire self-expression, activism, and learning through art.
- To draw the connections between various experiences of injustice.

What people have to say about High Constrast

> "If this is an example of our future, then the world will be a better place." (Catherine Holder, Youth artists' mother)

> "The exhibit showed me that there are many people in this world that are in pain because they aren't respected for who they are. I especially liked the desk in the exhibit. It was the thing I could most relate to. Almost all my desks in all the classes I've had since middle school have had some kind of offensive writing on it. I can imagine someone sitting in that same desk everyday, staring at the offensive writing on the desk." (Student, Pinole Valley High School)

> "I liked the diversity of students related to the exhibit. It combined racial diversity with homophobia and showed students taking action - those two factors were important. My classes are pretty much solidly Latino and African American and most of them were able to find parts of it to relate to. It inspired some students to want to do a project like this about their own issues." (Mara Mills, GSA Advisor, Santa Cruz High School)

> "I never knew the things I said could affect people. When I walk out that building that day I felt sad. I didn't mean to hurt anybody's feelings, but I know now that I should be careful about what I say." (student, Lincoln High School, San Jose)

High Contrast was created through a collaborative project of the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, LYRIC (Lavendar Youth Recreation and Information Center) and the Wedge Program of the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

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