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Harvey Milk Day Curriculum and Web Resources Announced by the California Safe Schools Coalition

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Francisco – Harvey Milk Day will be officially celebrated on May 22, 2011 in California this year as a day of special recognition devoted to recognizing Harvey Milk's contributions to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community and the development of California. The California Safe Schools Coalition, GSA Network, and Our Family Coalition have come together to create a website for educators to access curriculum about Harvey Milk, in the spirit of the law signed in October 2009 by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The website includes new Harvey Milk Day curriculum suitable for teaching high school students as well as existing curriculum already in use in elementary schools. The three organizations hope the new web-based resources will enable more schools to conduct lessons remembering the life of Harvey Milk, recognizing his accomplishments, and familiarizing students with the contributions he made to California and the LGBT community. Informative exercises about Harvey Milk have the potential to not only educate students about Harvey Milk, but also foster diversity and respect for all.

Research from the California Safe Schools Coalition found that students who report learning about LGBT topics in the classroom are more likely to feel safe at school and report lower rates of bullying and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity. For example, in schools where the majority of youth report having learned about LGBT people in the curriculum, only 11% of students report being bullied, but that number more than doubles to 24% if the majority of students in a school say they haven't learned about LGBT people.

Designed by and hosted on the Safe Schools Coalition's website, the Harvey Milk Day curriculum is easily accessible to teachers and educators. The website includes a short educational biography on Harvey Milk, curriculum organized by grade level, resources and links for Harvey Milk books and movies, and also a link that allows teachers to submit curricula they have developed for their own classes that may benefit others.

For more information please visit: www.safeschoolscoalition.org/harveymilkday/ [3].

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California Safe Schools Coalition is a statewide partnership of organizations and individuals dedicated to eliminating discrimination and harassment on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity in California schools. www.casafeschools.org

Gay-Straight Alliance Network (GSA Network) is a youth leadership organization that empowers youth activists to fight homophobia and transphobia in schools by training youth activists and supporting student-led Gay-Straight Alliance clubs. www.gsanetwork.org

Our Family Coalition promotes the equality and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer families with children. Our Family Coalition fosters community leadership in advocacy efforts that promote social justice. www.ourfamily.org

http://www.gsanetwork.org [4]

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