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REPORT: California Schools Safer With LGBT-Inclusive Curricula

A new study released last week by the Gay-Straight Alliance Network and the California Safe Schools Coalition (CSSC) examines the impact of LGBTQ-inclusive curricula on school climate. The results confirm that not only do inclusive curricula foster a safer environment, but the effect is amplified if the messages are supportive as opposed to ?neutral/mixed? or not supportive. Not only did LGBTQ students feel safer, but they also performed better academically and felt more connected to the school, their teachers, and their future.

Inclusive lessons had a slightly different impact. In physical education classes, for example, ?neutral/mixed? inclusion of LGBTQ lessons still had a negative impact on students? perceptions of safety, but when there were supportive lessons, it had the most significant positive impact. Conversely, in Health and Sexuality courses, any inclusion of LGBTQ issues/people had a positive effect on school climate.

The study also confirmed the huge impact that gay-straight alliances (GSAs) can have. Students who benefited the most from inclusive curricula were members of their school?s GSA, including higher GPAs and a stronger sense of school belonging. Unsurprisingly, LGBTQ students with neither inclusive curricula nor a GSA had the most negative perceptions of school safety.

None of these results are new. GLSEN similarly found a significant positive impact from inclusive curricula, and the Family Acceptance Project found that GSAs mitigate depression and even help improve college academic performance. These results are important as hate groups like the Family Research Council continue to attack California?s FAIR Education Act with old debunked scare tactics, attempting to deprive LGBT youth of the opportunity to learn about their own identities and feel safe in school.

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News Article
http://thinkprogress.org/lgbt/2012/06/12/497389/report-calif... [1]
Think Progress
Zack Ford

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