

## Lesson 8:

# INVESTIGATING ANTI-LGBT TEASING

### Grades 6-8



#### Goals

- Explore how and why students use anti-LGBT slurs.
- Explore the effect of anti-LGBT slurs on entire student body.
- Discuss teasing of boys being or seeming “too feminine” and girls being or seeming “too masculine.”
- Discuss students who consider suicide and what to do in such situations.

#### Objectives

- Students will conduct basic survey data collection.
- Students will convert whole numbers to percentages.
- Students will demonstrate use of graphic displays for presenting statistical information.
- Students will identify anti-LGBT slurs and name-calling when used by peers and adults.
- Students will explain how anti-LGBT teasing is hurtful and harmful to others.

#### Time Required

This lesson can be done over three 40-minute periods. The third session is based upon student work done outside the classroom. It is recommended that teachers allow for one to two days between session two and the final session for students to complete their survey assignment.

#### Materials

**Let's Get Real** film (part of The Respect For All Project), newspaper or magazine article with pie chart or bar graph, butcher paper or poster board, markers or colored pencils.

Let's  
Get Real

Photos in this lesson are from **Let's Get Real** another Respect For All Project film.



### Teaching Tip

This lesson is based on a clip from ***Let's Get Real***. For the purpose of this lesson you will only be using Chapter Six of the film, which focuses on anti-LGBT teasing and name-calling. It is recommended that early in the school year you show the entire film to place anti-LGBT bullying in a broader context. It will be helpful to have basic vocabulary and definitions available for students during this discussion to avoid unnecessary or unintended use of hurtful language. (See Vocabulary Guide in the Appendix on page 121 of this guide.) It is also important to set ground rules for your discussion and refer back to those ground rules as necessary. Finally, the subject of suicide is raised in the film and it is important that teachers spend some time reviewing school procedures and local resources for supporting students who may feel concerned about this issue or need help and support. See page 100 for more guidance on addressing suicide with youth.

Showing the film in its entirety can be an extension to this lesson, and would require additional planning and preparation. For more guidance see the ***Let's Get Real*** curriculum guide.

### Pre-Teaching

In this lesson students will be asked to reflect on the use of anti-LGBT slurs and teasing that they have experienced or observed. They will then be asked to investigate the impact of this behavior on their peers. Before beginning the lesson find a pie chart or bar graph in a popular newspaper or magazine that presents social demographics or survey results. Talk briefly about how the visual representations help people understand information with more ease and efficiency than a list of numbers. Discuss the use of percentages as a helpful way to communicate results in graphical presentations. Let students know that they are going to work as researchers or investigators on a topic that can be reported on in this way.



## Discussion Starters: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

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**Use of anti-gay/anti-lesbian slurs.** Show Chapter Six of *Let's Get Real* to the entire class. After you show the clip, engage the students in the discussion topics below.

How many of you have heard people calling each other “gay,” “queer,” “lesbian,” “faggot” or “dyke” at this school? In the film, Brian talks about people referring to everything from people to pencils as “gay” as a common put down. Stephen says he uses the word faggot because it “gets to” the target faster. How is the word gay used at this school? Why do people use anti-gay or anti-lesbian slurs? Think about what Carlos said about how his stepfather called him “gay” when he wasn’t acting “manly”.

In the film, students explain that anti-LGBT slurs are used to mean different things. Ask your students what they think people are really saying when they call someone “gay,” “dyke,” “lesbian,” “homo,” “fag” or “bisexual.” Do they mean, “I think you are romantically attracted to a person of the same sex”? If not, what do they really mean? (Some examples might be they think the person is ugly, weak, uncool or they just want to make someone mad.)

**Acting “too” masculine or feminine.** Students in the film talk about boys being feminine or girls wearing baggy jeans and sports jackets. Why does this cause bullying? Does this mean that boys considered “too feminine” or girls considered “too masculine” are gay or lesbian? What is a gender stereotype? How might gender stereotypes be harmful?

**Effect of anti-gay slurs.** How does anti-gay name-calling and bullying affect people who are or may be gay? How might it affect someone who is not gay? What kind of toll do you think it takes on a person to be called “faggot” all day long in his ear? How did it affect Brian? When Brian’s friends tried to step in, they were harassed and called “gay” as well. Why do some students harass people who try to intervene? What would be an effective way for friends to step in without becoming targets themselves?

**Suicide.** How would you feel if you found out that someone who had been picked on ended up hurting himself or herself or committing suicide? How do you know if people who say they are going to kill themselves are serious? Why would someone think of committing suicide? If you know someone who wants to commit suicide or if you are thinking of it yourself, what can you do?

For more information about addressing suicide, go to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention website at [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org).



**Investigating and Reporting Data.** Have students conduct an in-school survey to count the number of times they hear anti-LGBT slurs at school. The period for the survey can be modified from a full day to just one class period or location such as the lunchroom. You can utilize the survey form found on page 102 of this guide, or design your own with the help of the students.

After they collect data individually, ask students to discuss their results as a group (be sure to refer back to your discussion guidelines before you begin). Ask students to:

1. Assess what they think the person using the slurs was really trying to communicate.
2. Calculate the average number of slurs per day.
3. Count the number of times another student or teacher intervened.

After the discussion and group instruction, ask students to report their findings in the form of a pie chart or bar graph. Students should be instructed to display the results on poster board or butcher paper that is large enough to share with others or to be displayed in the classroom or on a school bulletin board. Students should label their chart with accurate titles and with a reference to the location, time and date that the survey was conducted (e.g. "Lunchroom at Smith Jr. High School 12 pm-1 pm 4/12/08")

Ask students to reflect upon the ways that they could be allies to those who are being targeted with anti-LGBT name-calling and harassment.



### TEACHING NOTES

#### Extension Activity

Have the students work in groups to write a report of their findings for a school newsletter or bulletin. The article could include a pie chart or graphical presentation of their findings.

On a bulleting board or chart paper have students list strategies for becoming allies (e.g. interrupt name-calling, report acts of injustice to a trusted adult). Add one new strategy each week over the course of an entire semester.

Credit: This lesson was excerpted from GroundSpark, The Respect For All Project, **Let's Get Real** Curriculum Guide



# Handout

## Survey: What's Going On At Our School?

Place a check (✓) next to the things people get bullied or harassed about at our school.

Put a star (\*) next to the ones that you think happen the most or are the most serious at our school.

From the **Let's Get Real** Curriculum Guide © GroundSpark, The Respect For All Project

| Reason   | ✓ or * |
|--|--------|
| Their race or color (or what someone thought their race was)                   |        |
| Being a lighter or darker skin tone compared to others                         |        |
| Being from another country   |        |
| Speaking with an accent  |        |
| Being new to this city/school  |        |
| Their mental or physical disability (or a disability someone though they had)  |        |
| Their religion (or what religion someone thought they were)                    |        |
| Their clothes  |        |
| How much money their family has  |        |
| Being in special education   |        |
| Getting good grades/doing well in school                                       |        |
| Getting bad grades/not doing well in school                                    |        |
| Being overweight   |        |
| Not being popular  |        |
| Boys making comments about girls' bodies                                       |        |
| Girls making comments about boys' bodies                                       |        |
| Being a boy who "acts like a girl"   |        |
| Being called a bad word related to being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender |        |
| Their age (being younger)  |        |
| Being smaller or not being good at sports                                      |        |
| Other:   |        |
| Other:   |        |

1. Are there different groups of students at our school (*circle one*) YES NO If so, what are they?

2. Which groups have conflicts with other groups?

3. If you were in charge, what would you do to stop what you have notices above?