



International Day Against Homophobia 2011

It's a fact! Homophobic insults between children start as early as primary school. “Faggot!” “That’s so gay!” “Homo!” “Lesbo!” Homophobia can take the form of social rejection or bullying in elementary school and continue throughout the school years.

Adults in authority sometimes don't know what to do when faced with these situations. Their responses can include trivialisation (“Kids don't even understand what they're saying”), generalisation (“This kind of bullying has always existed, it's part of growing up”) or negation (“It's not really that serious, no one got hurt”).

Wrong! Research shows that homophobia is ubiquitous in Quebec Schools (Chamberland, 2010) and that persistent harassment can have even more negative effects than isolated incidents of physical violence. Homophobia can lead to a loss of self-esteem, school dropout, drug and alcohol abuse, and even suicide.

Whether victims or witnesses, youth that hear these insults and see that those in authority have nothing to say on the subject, assimilate the message that homophobia is okay. Children learn that intolerance is acceptable in our society.

It's time to act! In honour of the **International Day against Homophobia (May 17th 2011)** the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT), in collaboration with the LGBT Family Coalition, is launching a bilingual resource to be used by elementary and high school educators who wish to be better equipped to intervene when faced with homophobic or sexist incidents, and intimidation among students.

“Promoting Diversity and Inclusion: Strategies to End Homophobia in Schools” is a free-of-charge training session and resource kit. Since its inception in June 2009, more than 3,000 participants from the education sector have taken part in this workshop. Using the experiences of children with same-sex parents as a springboard, this dynamic, interactive workshop can help educators and administrators working with youth to address homophobia. By expanding knowledge about the diversity of family structures, including homoparental families, teachers can promote better understanding and respect for differences while fighting against discrimination, disinformation, fears, and prejudice. A resource kit of various practical tools including lesson plans, a poster, a book and resource lists is provided to workshop participants.

For information or to book a workshop please contact: Mona Greenbaum (LGBT Family Coalition) 514-846-1543 (info@familleshomoparentales.org) or Sarah Adair (QPAT) 514-694-9777 (sarah_adair@qpat-apeq.qc.ca)

The LGBT Family Coalition is a group of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans-identified (LGBT) parents or future parents advocating for the legal and social recognition of homoparental families.

Workshop and resources are available thanks to financial support from the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) and QPAT

Chamberland, Line (2010) L'impact de l'homophobie et de la violence homophobe sur la persévérance et la réussite scolaires. Fonds de recherche sur la société et la culture Québec, Rapport de recherche: programme actions concertées.