

Create Safer Schools in Georgia Support Anti-bullying legislation

Safe schools are necessary to achieve educational excellence. Students who are bullied often develop high levels of fear and stress, which negatively impacts schoolwork and grades. In addition, bullying creates an atmosphere where all students may feel unsafe, negatively impacting academic performance on a larger scale.

Proposed legislation accurately defines the scope and impact of bullying, requires local school systems to work with faculty, parents, and students to adopt and enforce anti-bullying policies, and makes it easier for students and necessary for school employees to report information about bullying.

According to the National Education Association, most boys identified as bullies in grades six to nine had one criminal conviction by age 24. According to another study, 40 percent of those identified had three or more arrests by age 30. Researchers have found that bullies often grow up to perpetuate family violence.¹

Proposed legislation gives teachers, parents and students the authority to write bullying policies that make sense for their local schools to tackle bullying before it gets out of hand.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, children who bully are more likely to get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school. They are also more likely to skip school, smoke, and drink alcohol.²

A University of Georgia study reports that approaches to combat bullying like those outlined in this legislation will lead to significant reductions of bullying in our schools.³

Bullying scares some children so much that they skip school. Across the country, as many as 160,000 students stay home any given day because they're afraid of being bullied. Bullying can lead to problems later in life.² According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, bullying significantly contributes to increased rates of youth suicide.⁴

According to the most recent Georgia Student Health Survey (2007), over 17% of elementary and 27% of high school students did not feel their school was a safe space. Furthermore, 21% of elementary and 8% of high school students reporting being bullied in the previous 30 days.

***If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation,
please contact Jeff Graham, Georgia Equality Executive Director,
at (404) 327-9898.***

1. National Education Association. <<http://www.nea.org/schoolsafety/bullying.html>>.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <<http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov>>.
3. Horne, Ph.D., Arthur M., Dawn Newman, and Christi L. Bartolomucci. "Bully Busters" (2000).
4. American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry . <http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/bullying>.