

Findings



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Homosexual Indoctrination

How Safety is Used to Promote Homosexuality in Schools

By Alysse M. ElHage



Michael and Tonya Hartsell of Wilmington, N.C., never expected to be confronted with the issue of homosexuality when they sat

down with their seven-year-old daughter to read the book she had brought home from the Rachel Freeman Elementary School library. But just a few pages into *King & King*, the Hartsells discovered that their first grader had unknowingly picked out a fairy tale about a homosexual prince who marries another prince. They were more stunned by the book's ending—a picture of the two men kissing with a red heart covering their lips. “I was shocked!” Mrs. Hartsell told the North Carolina Family Policy Council. “All I could think about was how long has this book been on the shelves at the library, and how many other innocent children have gotten hold of it?” The Hartsells alerted other parents about the book and filed a written complaint with the school. Thanks to their efforts, a school committee voted on March 27, 2004 to restrict access to the book to adults only.¹

The fact that a first grader in North Carolina could go to her elementary school library and pick out a fairy tale about two homosexual princes who get “married” raises some important questions about what is happening in our schools. Many parents mistakenly assume that homosexuality is not being promoted in North Carolina’s education system, especially when state law prohibits homosexuals from marrying and requires public schools to teach that abstinence from sex until marriage is the expected standard of behavior for school-age children.² But what happened to the Hartsells

is just proof that the Tar Heel state is not immune to the nationwide efforts of homosexual activists to infiltrate the classroom. In fact, homosexual advocacy groups are training teachers and students, and homosexual student clubs are forming in schools across North Carolina, where controversial topics, such as transgenderism, are being favorably presented. The majority of these efforts are taking place outside of the sex education classroom under the guise of creating “safer,” more “inclusive” schools.

This paper will show how homosexual activists are using safe schools initiatives and diversity education to get into the classroom to promote dangerous messages about sex and gender, and how these efforts threaten parental authority, religious freedom and free speech.

“Safe” Schools

Safe schools initiatives are one of the most effective yet subtle tactics being used to promote homosexuality in the classroom. They are part of a cunning strategy by homosexual activists to convince educators that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) students are disproportionately abused, harassed and subjected to discrimination by their classmates and some teachers on a daily basis. While everyone would agree that schools should be safe for all children, safe schools initiatives implement policies and programs that create a learning environment where homosexuality is affirmed.

The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) is one of the main homosexual advocacy groups behind safe schools initiatives. Founded in 1995 by Kevin Jennings, a former teacher from Winston-Salem, GLSEN has about 70 chapters nationwide, including chapters in Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and the Triangle.³

GLSEN’s “National School Climate Survey” is used to make the case that “violence and harassment against GLBT students is epidemic.”⁴ According to the 2003 survey of homosexual students: over 84 percent reported being verbally harassed at school because of their sexual orientation, nearly 40 percent reported being physically harassed, and over 90 percent reported hearing “anti-GLBT” comments.⁵

Homosexual activists blame the hostile school climate on “homophobia” (which they define as “bias against or dislike of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people”) and on “heterosexism” (“presumption that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality or bisexuality”).⁶ Their solution—and the goal of pro-homosexual safe schools initiatives—is for schools to teach that homosexuality is normal and healthy, and that anyone who believes otherwise is a bigot.

In a 1995 speech, GLSEN’s Kevin Jennings explained how homosexual activists used the safety issue in Massachusetts to get the nation’s first state-funded safe schools program implemented:

“In Massachusetts, the effective reframing of this issue was the key to the success of the Governor’s Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth. We immediately seized upon the opponent’s calling card—safety—and explained how homophobia represents a threat to students’ safety by creating a climate where violence, name-calling, health problems and suicide are common. Titled our report, ‘Making Schools Safe for Gay and Lesbian Youth,’ we automatically threw our opponents onto the defensive and stole their best line of attack.”⁷

Homosexual activists are using the same “safety” argument in North Carolina. In 2003, GLSEN Winston-Salem rented

a billboard on Highway 52 that was designed to look like a blackboard and read: "Reading. Writing. Hate. What are students really learning in school?" The billboard is part of an ongoing campaign organized by the state's GLSEN chapters and other homosexual groups to urge the North Carolina General Assembly to consider "safe schools" legislation that would include special protections for GLBT students.⁸ Also in 2003, local homosexual activists formed a non-profit organization called Safe Schools N.C., which is aimed at fighting "homophobia" in schools.⁹

Safe schools initiatives involve several components that can be implemented together or alone, including: state or local nondiscrimination and/or anti-bullying policies; anti-violence and "sensitivity" training for school staff; homosexual student clubs; and safety programs.

1) Non-discrimination and anti-bullying policies that include "sexual orientation" and "gender identity/expression" are key components of safe schools initiatives. Proponents claim that their purpose is to make schools safe for all students. But these policies institute special protections for a wide range of alternative behaviors and lifestyles, and open the door for GLSEN and other groups to promote the acceptance of homosexuality in schools.

To understand the impact of these policies, it is important to examine the characteristics homosexual activists want included. The "sexual orientation" characteristic provides special protections for students and teachers who identify as homosexual or bisexual. The "gender identity/expression" characteristic is intended to give transgender students the opportunity to express themselves as male or female, regardless of their biological sex, through changes in their appearance and voice, and also to ensure they have access to rest rooms, locker rooms and activities that match the gender identity they choose.

Clearly, these policies go beyond prohibiting name-calling and violence to protecting everything from openly homosexual teachers and cross-dressing students to "gender-neutral" bathrooms. They also stifle the ability of students and teachers to express opposition to homosexual and transgender behaviors.

In North Carolina, the Guilford County School District has the most extensive nondiscrimination policy to date. In January 2004, the Guilford County Board of Education approved the "Discrimination

Free Environment" policy for the school system, which includes protections for "sexual orientation" and "gender identity/expression."¹⁰

In the summer of 2004, the State Board of Education considered a policy that would have required all local boards of education in North Carolina to implement anti-bullying policies that included special protections for 16 specific characteristics, including "sexual orientation" and "gender identity/expression." After receiving numerous calls from concerned citizens over the issue, the State Board of Education voted in July to omit the 16 characteristics and approved a more general policy that requires local boards of education to "develop and maintain policies and procedures to prevent, intervene, investigate, document, and report all acts of harassment, bullying, or discrimination no later than January 2005."¹¹

2) Teacher training is another important component of safe schools initiatives. Homosexual advocacy groups work hand-in-hand with educators at the national, state and local levels to convince teachers that homosexual behavior must be affirmed for schools to be safe.

For example, the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) offers the pro-homosexual videos, "It's Elementary" and "That's a Family," on its web site under suggested resources.¹² Also, Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), a homosexual advocacy group that works closely with GLSEN and has several chapters in North Carolina, presented an "anti-gay bullying" training workshop at the National PTA's 2004 conference.¹³

Homosexual activists are also training educators in North Carolina. Safe Schools N.C. has presented "safety" trainings for teachers at: the Department of Public Instruction's Safe Schools Conference, The Character Education Conference, the N.C. Statewide School Counselor's Conference, the Wake County Public Schools Counselors Conference, and the Chapel Hill/Carrboro public schools counselors conference.¹⁴

3) Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) are the "most visible" component of safe schools initiatives nationwide.¹⁵ GSAs are defined as "in-school, extracurricular groups that support LGBT students, those questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity, and their straight friends and allies."¹⁶ These clubs serve as political vehicles for homosexual activists, who use them to gain access to students and to

promote their agenda.

A study of 22 GSAs found that they play four primary roles in schools: counseling and support; creating a "safe" space; raising awareness, educating and increasing visibility of GLBT students and issues; and becoming part of broader efforts, such as creating school-based safe schools task forces.¹⁷

GSAs provide local homosexual advocacy groups with access to schools that they might not have otherwise. In fact, one of the GSA activities recommended by GLSEN is for club members to invite guest speakers from "local GLBT community groups" to speak at the meetings.¹⁸ These local homosexual organizations offer support for GLBT students and sponsor training programs that turn adolescents into homosexual activists in their schools. For example, in November 2004, GLSEN Greensboro held a student training aimed at teaching homosexual students how to document and report harassment.¹⁹

GSA student members also promote and organize special homosexual events in schools, such as the annual "Day of Silence" (April), "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month" (October), and "Diversity Week."²⁰ According to GLSEN, at least 25 schools in North Carolina have registered GSA student clubs, and 55 schools participated in the 2004 "Day of Silence."²¹

4) Safety Programs. Another tactic used by homosexual activists is to incorporate lessons on sexual orientation and gender identity into subjects where most people would not think to look for them, such as in school safety or violence prevention programs. For example, in 2003, a pro-homosexual video called "Sexual Orientation: Reading Between the Labels," was included on a list of suggested materials for Wake County teachers to use during the violence prevention unit of Healthful Living II, a high school elective that covers a wide range of issues. In the video, homosexuality is portrayed as natural, and teens are warned never to "come out" to their parents or to other family members who may not embrace their homosexual lifestyle. Reportedly, only one high school teacher in Wake County used the video in 2003 before a group of concerned parents got involved.²²

Another example is an education project in middle schools called "No Name-Calling Week," which is scheduled for January 24-28, 2005. Created by GLSEN and Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, the project was inspired by

a young adult novel called *The Misfits*, which was written by openly homosexual author, James Howe. Over 600 schools participated in the 2004 event.²³

Sexual Diversity?

In conjunction with safe schools programs, homosexual activists are also using diversity education to get into the classroom. They argue that a “safe” learning environment must also be “inclusive,” where homosexual topics are integrated into every subject—from health to math. According to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, “Multicultural education with curricular integration of LGBT issues reduces the alienation felt by LGBT students who do not see themselves reflected in school materials.”²⁴

When it comes to making schools “inclusive,” sex education is obviously at the top of the list for homosexual activists. They are among the leading proponents of comprehensive sex education programs, which include lessons on sexual orientation, same-sex relationships, and how to use and where to get condoms. Since its passage in 1996, North Carolina’s Abstinence-Until-Marriage law has been targeted by national and local homosexual advocacy groups that object to the emphasis on heterosexuality and sex within marriage.

But their efforts go beyond sex education. According to the Safe Schools Coalition, a national homosexual advocacy group, “the goal is GLBT inclusiveness infused in the life of the school.” The Safe Schools Coalition suggests that in math class, students “make pie charts of how many GLBT people there are in their textbooks.” In science, the group suggests that students “explore the biology of sexual diversity,” and in language arts, students should “read GLBT-inclusive children’s books about families and about gender non-conforming kids.”²⁵ In the name of diversity, schools are also pressured to stock their libraries with homosexual-friendly materials for children of all ages, such as *King & King* for first graders.

Sexual and Gender Confusion

While homosexual activists may claim their goal is to promote safety and diversity in the classroom, their real agenda is to indoctrinate children from kindergarten through high school with their dangerous ideology of human sexuality and gender. Every student is vulnerable to the messages homosexual activists seek to promote through safe schools programs.

In 2003, Time Out Youth, a homosexual youth group in Charlotte, attempted to rent five billboards from Adams Outdoor Advertising to feature the slogan “It’s OK to Be Gay.” The advertising firm turned down their request, pointing out that the slogan sounded encouraging of homosexuality and would be offensive to many parents.²⁶ That slogan sums up what homosexual activists want taught in every classroom under the guise of safety and diversity. For example, a PFLAG brochure for adolescents states: “It is okay to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender... Not only is it as natural, it’s as healthy to be gay, lesbian and bisexual as to be straight—no matter what some people might tell you.”²⁷

Teaching students that homosexuality is as “natural” as heterosexuality is not only erroneous but also dangerous. The human body was not designed for homosexual activity, such as anal intercourse, which can seriously damage the body and is considered one of the highest risk behaviors for contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.²⁸ Homosexual behavior also puts youth at risk for serious physical and mental health problems. The Medical Institute for Sexual Health reports: “Homosexual men are at significantly increased risk of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, anal cancer, gonorrhea and gastrointestinal infections as a result of their sexual practices. Women who have sex with women are at significantly increased risk of bacterial vaginosis, breast cancer and ovarian cancer than are heterosexual women.”²⁹ According to the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, homosexual men and lesbians are also at an increased risk for drug and alcohol abuse, and depression.³⁰

Not only do homosexual activists want children to grow up believing that all forms of sexual behavior are equal, but they also envision a gender-neutral society, where being male or female is determined by feelings, not birth. For example, a 2001 GLSEN publication for educators states, “gender is not intrinsically tied to a person’s biological sex,” and “our biological maleness or femaleness does not naturally determine to whom we are attracted, and our sexual attractions do not naturally indicate whether we are male or female.”³¹

This gender confusion not only promotes transgender behavior but is also linked to the acceptance of homosexuality. If gender is interchangeable, then how can there be anything wrong with a sexual relationship between two people of the same sex?

Silencing Opposing Voices

Pro-homosexual safe schools initiatives represent a significant threat to parental authority, religious freedom and free speech in schools. Even as they claim to promote tolerance and diversity, homosexual activists attempt to silence anyone who does not affirm their lifestyle, including parents, religious or mental health organizations, and students. In particular, the Biblical worldview of sexuality is not welcome in the diversity they promote.

Homosexual activists often portray parents as homophobic individuals who should be feared by their own children. PFLAG’s “Be Yourself” brochure states: “Some teens who come out to their parents are forced to leave home. Some parents become abusive...don’t come out to your parents until you have a safe place to go...Remember that your parent(s) are from an older generation—one that was more homophobic and transphobic than yours...they may try to bring in a psychiatrist to ‘cure’ you.”³²

It undermines parental authority to suggest to teenagers that confiding in their parents might be dangerous. As the people who brought them into the world, know them best, and have the most concern for their well-being, parents should be the first to know if their child is struggling with gender or sexual orientation issues, not the last.

When it comes to the diversity of viewpoints on sexual orientation, homosexual activists and their allies only want young people to hear one perspective—theirs. They especially do not want students to hear from churches or religious groups, which teach that individuals can leave the homosexual lifestyle through faith in Christ. Nor do they want students to hear from mental health professionals who support the use of reparative therapy to change sexual orientation, such as members of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality.³³

This was evident in a 1999 booklet endorsed by the National Education Association and other groups, called *Just the Facts About Sexual Orientation and Youth*. The booklet states that major mental health professionals “have all taken the position that homosexuality is not a mental disorder and thus there is no need for a cure.” It continues:

“Also, a guidance counselor in a public school context may not attempt

to persuade gay, lesbian, or bisexual students of the religious belief that homosexuality is a sin, or otherwise seek to impose a negative view of being gay, lesbian or bisexual on the student.school officials should be deeply concerned about the validity and bias of materials or presentations that promote a change to a person's sexual orientation as a 'cure' or suggest that being gay, lesbian or bisexual is unhealthy."³⁴

Statements like these send the false message to young people and educators that adolescents who experience same-sex attractions are locked into homosexuality for life. This disregards the experiences of thousands of men and women who have left the homosexual lifestyle through religious faith and/or therapy. Furthermore, *Just the Facts* ignores scientific research that shows that sexual orientation change is possible. For example, a 2003 study by Robert Spitzer, Ph.D., a psychiatrist who was instrumental in the 1973 decision to remove homosexuality from the psychiatric manual of mental disorders, found "evidence that reparative therapy is sometimes successful." Dr. Spitzer concluded that, "mental health professionals should stop moving in the direction of banning therapy that has, as a goal, a change in sexual orientation."³⁵

Students with deeply held religious beliefs about homosexuality are also being silenced in the name of promoting safety and diversity. Mark Austin, a high school student from Boone, N. C., was suspended from Watauga High School in April 2004 for refusing to remove a t-shirt he designed to protest the observance of the pro-homosexual "Day of Silence" at his school. Mark's shirt, which school officials called offensive, featured the words, "Homosexuality is sin," "Hell is REAL," and "Jesus is the Answer" on the front, and "Shout for Joy" on the back.³⁶

Conclusion

Homosexual activists do not need to set foot in a sex education classroom to undermine the authority of parents and to indoctrinate children with their dangerous ideology. By disguising their agenda behind safe schools initiatives and

diversity education, groups like GLSEN can slip into schools "under the radar," demand the acceptance of homosexuality, and silence opposing views—all in the name of protecting homosexual students. The fact that more youth are "identifying" as homosexual, bisexual or transgender at younger ages is evidence that their efforts are working.

While every child should be safe from harm at school, there is a major difference between teaching children to respect others, and the affirmation that homosexual activists seek to promote. The classroom should never be used to encourage dangerous sexual behaviors, or as a recruitment center for homosexual advocacy groups. Instead of giving in to the demands of homosexual activists, educators in North Carolina should protect the rights of all students by working with families to teach respect for others without singling out a particular group for special treatment.

Alysse M. ElHage is a research fellow with the North Carolina Family Policy Council.

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