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FAQ: GSA Network



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What is a GSA?

A Genders & Sexualities Alliance (GSA) is a student-initiated and student-run club in a public or

private school. The goal of a GSA is to provide a safe, supportive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ) and straight ally youth to meet and discuss sexual orientation and gender identity issues, and to work to create a school environment free of discrimination, harassment, and intolerance.

How many GSAs are there in California?

There are well over 900 Genders & Sexualities Alliance clubs registered with GSA Network from across California. This includes more than 53% of the public high schools in California.

Does GSA Network start or sponsor GSAs in schools?

No, because GSA clubs in schools are student-initiated and student-run. However, GSA Network offers support, technical assistance, training, and networking opportunities to students and advisors who wish to start or run a GSA to end homophobia and transphobia in schools. We offer regional trainings and summits open to students and advisors who are starting a GSA club. GSA Network also supports non-school-based GSA clubs for youth in areas (e.g. rural areas) where there are few GSAs established in schools.

Can GSA student clubs be banned from schools?

No. GSAs cannot be banned if other non-curricular student clubs are allowed to exist at the school. The [Federal Equal Access Act](#) ^[2] and the First Amendment of the US Constitution establish the requirement of equal treatment for all non-curriculum related clubs regardless of the content of speech at the club meetings.

What impact do GSAs have on school climate?

Anecdotal evidence indicates that GSAs can greatly improve the school climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning students and their allies. GSAs that conduct student and teacher sensitivity trainings typically see a decrease in slurs, name-calling, and harassment following their advocacy efforts. GSAs also create safe spaces for students to meet and socialize in a harassment-free environment.

Are there GSAs in middle schools?

As of February 2013, there are over 40 GSAs established in middle schools or junior highs in California. Harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity is also pervasive in middle schools and junior highs and data from the California Healthy Kids Survey shows that it is even more pervasive..

Where is GSA Network located?

GSA Network is headquartered in Oakland, we have regional offices in Fresno (serving the Central Valley), Los Angeles (serving Southern California), New Orleans, LA (serving the Southeast US), and Chicago (serving the Midwest).

Where can I find resources for adults who want to support GSAs?

If you are a GSA advisor or school worker, please share our [resources](#) [3] with the young folks you work with and then check out a resource we specifically designed for you - [Advisors Handbook](#) [4]. Additional resources can be found [here](#) [5].

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