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Nov. 15, 2011 ? Jill



Young people and adults who spend time in middle and high schools know that Gay-Straight Alliance clubs make it better. Now, there's hard data to back it up: [according to a study](#) ^[1] released today by the [Family Acceptance Project](#) ^[2], **LGBT youth who attend middle or high schools with GSAs "have better mental health as young adults, are less likely to drop out of high school, and more likely to attend college."**

This groundbreaking study, "High School Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) and Young Adult Well-Being," is the first to demonstrate the long-term benefits of GSA participation.

Co-author Stephen T. Russell, friend of GSA Network, emphasized the importance of youth leadership: "This study adds to the mounting evidence that youth-led clubs are important for healthy development — especially for youth at risk. For LGBT youth, high school gay-straight alliances make a significant positive difference."

That does not mean, of course, that GSAs are the ONLY measures schools should support. Co-author Russell Toomey points out that "our findings document that other LGBT-positive supports need to be implemented in schools for LGBT students to thrive." Enumerated anti-harassment and non-discrimination policies, for example, go hand-in-hand with GSAs to create a safer school

environment.

With published studies supporting us, there's no excuse for principals to suppress GSA clubs. [Write your former principal a letter](#) [3] or [film a message](#) [4] to all principals demanding that they support Gay-Straight Alliances! To start a GSA in your school, check out [GSA Network's resources](#) [5].

Source URL: <https://gsanetwork.org/news/blog/researchers-prove-gsas-make-it-better/11/15/11>

Links

[1] <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2011/11/15/us-study-gay-straight-alliance-membership-correlates-with-better-mental-health/>

[2] <http://familyproject.sfsu.edu/home>

[3] <http://www.makeitbetterproject.org/write-a-letter>

[4] <http://www.makeitbetterproject.org/film-letter>

[5] <https://gsanetwork.org/resources/building-your-gsa/10-steps-starting-gsa>