

Research Findings: SOGI in Education

SOGI-focused statistics can be useful in supporting system level change, and in helping colleagues, caregivers, and families to understand why SOGI-inclusion is necessary in K-12 education. Below are some key research findings that may be useful in your conversations with administration, colleagues, and families. As with all statistics, please remember that these are not just numbers, but represent the experiences of real people.

Key Research Findings

Prevalence of Homophobia and Transphobia in Schools:

- **64%** of students reported hearing homophobic comments daily or weekly at school. ¹
- **62%** of 2SLGBTQ students feel unsafe at school, compared to **11%** of cisgender heterosexual (CH) students. ²
- **Only 23%** of trans youth reported usually or always feeling safe in school change rooms, and **only 35%** reported feeling safe in school washrooms. ³
- 2SLGBTQ Indigenous students were **2x as likely** (35%) to experience harassment based on their racialized identity than CH Indigenous students (14%). Similar differences were observed between 2SLGBTQ Black students (52%) and CH Black students (36%) as well as 2SLGBTQ Asian participants (41%) and CH Asian respondents (30%). ²
- Students with a parent who is 2SLGBTQ were **3x more likely** to report being physically harassed due to their sexual identity or their perceived sexual identity (19%) than students with CH parents (6%). ²

Impact of Homophobia and Transphobia in Schools:

- **The majority** of trans and non-binary youth reported their mental health as poor (45%) or fair (39%), while **only 16%** rated their mental health as good or excellent. ²
- The impact of 2SLGBTQ students' negative experiences (harassment, negative school climate) can result in a variety of adverse circumstances for 2SLGBTQ youth, including **higher levels of emotional distress, more negative experiences in school, social marginalization, lower feelings of safety in schools, lower academic performance, and weaker school attachment.** ²



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- Regardless of orientation, youth who were both targeted and overheard “homonegative” comments were less likely to perceive themselves as mattering to friends and had higher scores on depressive symptoms than youth who never heard or were targeted by comments. **Students’ sense of safety at school was positively associated with the absence of homonegative speech.** ⁴

Positive Impacts of SOGI-Inclusive Education:

- Trans youth who reported feeling high levels of connection with their school were **2x more likely** to report good or excellent mental health compared to those with lower levels of connection to their school. ³
- Almost **60%** of trans and non-binary students surveyed in Canada have their correct gender listed on their student ID cards. **13%** don’t know which gender is listed on their student records. ²
- 2SLGBTQ-focused policy in schools **acts as a protective factor for many 2SLGBTQ students** (i.e., they are more likely to be flourishing in their mental health and wellbeing; to experience greater school attachment, educator support, and effective intervention(s); and to experience less [homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic] harassment). ^{2,7}
- **SOGI 123 is effective at reducing violence and fostering more inclusive environments** in BC Schools, where SOGI 123 has been implemented the longest. The longer it has been implemented, the greater improvement. ⁵
- SOGI 123 is beneficial for inclusion and support of all students, not just LGBTQ+ students. SOGI 123 was shown to **have effects above and beyond GSAs, including for heterosexual students.** ⁵
- SOGI 123 **reduced bullying and discrimination** targeted toward LGBTQ+ youth above and beyond GSAs impact. SOGI 123 also reduced bullying and discrimination among heterosexual students, with effects that were even stronger than GSAs for some types of violence. **Verbal harassment, social exclusion, and physical assaults declined.** ⁵

Supporting Educators in SOGI-Inclusion:

- The most common reasons for inaction reported by educators were a **lack of training/resources** and general **fear of opposition** from sources such as legislation, school/district administration or trustees, parents, and religious groups. ⁶
- However, when educators were confident that they would be supported by the school environment (students, colleagues, administrators, teacher organizations, and legislation) **they were less likely to give these as reasons for inaction** and more likely to incorporate 2SLGBTQ+-inclusive practices, even in religious contexts or Catholic schools. ⁶



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Sources:

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