

Minutes 4-21-09, 3-5 p.m. PST
Safe Schools Coalition Meeting
Facilitating: Stefanie Fox; Recording: Heather Carter

HELP NEEDED REQUESTS ARE IN RED.

In attendance: Sean Lane, UW & Equal Rights Washington; Josh Friedes, Equal Rights Washington; Heather Carter, Youth Suicide Prevention Program; Helen Stillman, Safe Schools Coalition speakers' bureau manager, Lambert House, and American Friends Service Committee; Stefanie Fox, King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division; Frieda Takamura, retired! and Safe Schools Coalition co-chair; Beth Reis, Safe Schools Coalition co-chair and Public Health – Seattle & King County

And on the phone: Gabi Clayton, Safe Schools Coalition (webspinner, trainer and membership chair) and these member organizations: Families United Against Hate, Youth Guardian Services, and PFLAG-Olympia

MOMENT OF SILENCE for 6th grader Carl Joseph Walker-Hoover of Massachusetts and 5th grader Jaheem Herrera of Georgia, both 11 years old, who recently (April 6th and 16th, respectively) committed suicide subsequent, apparently, to relentless anti-gay bullying at school. [See <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/MindMoodNews/story?id=7328091&page=1> and http://www.aic.com/metro/content/metro/dekalb/stories/2009/04/21/boy_suicide_bullying_decalur.html]

- (1) HELP NEEDED: Are there curriculum writers who would like to collaborate on a lesson plan or two with the goal of reducing the rate of anti-gay bullying that can lead to suicides like Jaheem's and Carl's? We will be meeting to discuss what this curriculum should look like, content etc...please join this great project! Contact Heather Carter: Heather@yspp.org or 206-297-5922 ext.116**

Stefanie, Gabi, and Beth both expressed interest in this project, Jacque Larrainzar from Seattle office of civil rights is already on board also, and we may have a group of counselors that attend a group focusing on social justice at Seattle University interested also. We discussed what this would look like-possibly a 5th grade lesson plan and a 6th or 7th grade lesson plan and then a training for teachers and staff.

(2) SSC LEADERSHIP TEAM

- a) 15 minutes of **SHARING TIME**, where each person says a little about a current project, for networking purposes.
- Beth handed out some great resources: courageous conversations, how to be an ally, various handouts from the White Privilege Conference - all useful, but Beth only has them in paper form. If you want a copy contact Heather - Heather@yspp.org or 206-297-5922 ext.116 - she took them to have on hand for fairs and trainings she does.
 - Helen talked about a workshop she attended at the White Privilege Conference that looks at how to address racism between trainers in mixed race training teams - she'll look into whether or not she can share hand outs with folks.
 - **Email Stefanie – Stefanie.fox@kingcounty.gov - about Seattle Youth Pride Events that your organization has scheduled!**
 - The next SSC anti-racism meeting is set for May 7th from 5-7pm at Kaladi Bros coffee.
- b) 15 minutes on a **DEEPER QUESTION** each month ... this month: *"What was the initial spark or event that brought you into the coalition?"* We broke up into pairs and talked openly about what brought us to safe schools.

(3) WEB SITE REPORT – Gabi

- a) **HELP NEEDED: We need a volunteer, approximately 1 hour a week, to take over the calendar page of the web site. Contact Gabi:**

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/contact/?id=2>

- b) Gabi mentioned an email exchange she had with Readers Digest. They wanted us to link to their site on quitting tobacco smoking. After looking at the site Gabi responded, *"I find your suggestion that we link to the page set up to help people quit smoking puzzling. Safe Schools Coalition is an international public-private partnership in support of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth, that is working to help schools - at home and all over the world - become safe places where every family can belong, where every educator can teach, and where every child can learn, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. I don't see anything on the Reader's Digest Living Healthy pages specific to LGBT people. Your article "The ultimate sex guide for newlyweds" is offensive to us. We serve a population that is not yet able to marry, and thus many of our youths (and adults) see that they live in a world where they are second-class citizens. In your Family & Relationships section, all 11 of your "True Love Story Photos" are pictures of straight couples - as are your "6 Couples Share Their True Love Stories" - our children and families are invisible. Many of our young people are targets of harassment and hate crimes. They take the hate and turn it inward, and then many do self-destructive behaviors such as smoking, drugs, drinking, suicide. And while we might consider linking to a website with as much advertising as yours, it would be inappropriate and offensive for us to link to yours as it is now. If Reader's Digest would be interested in partnering with us to make your Living Healthy pages more welcoming, appealing and helpful to the communities we serve, please let us know. Thank you for writing to us."*

The staff at Readers Digest responded, *"I am sorry that you find our site to be offensive. My team and I thought that your site was a great resource and we thought that our information on Quitting Smoking could be of use to your young people who are looking to kick the nicotine addiction. Again, I apologize for upsetting you in any way. Have a great day."*

Heather agreed to follow up with them.

c) Report for March 2009

Average Hits per Day: 210,900 — compared to 21,357 in 1999

Total Page Views: 44,470 — compared to 3,644 in 1999

Total Visitors: 26,217 — compared to 2,062 in 1999

Visitors in March 2009 – 107 Countries compared to 10 Countries In 1999

Top 6 most popular pages:

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/>

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/safe.html>

http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/RG-bullying_harassment_schoolbasedviolence.html

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/RG-lessonplans.html>

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/contact/index.asp>

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/RG-homeless.html>

We updated the **suicide** page and added new information about **Caitlin Ryan/Family Acceptance Project research** in March.

(4) MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Gabi

- a) New member applications: **PFLAG of Skagit Valley** – unanimous consensus to accept them as members. **Welcome!** Kathy Reim is the regional director of PFLAG and has been the president of Skagit PFLAG since 2001.
- b) Thank you to more orgs that have renewed recently for 2009:
- **Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation**
 - **Seattle PFLAG**
 - **Planned Parenthood of the Inland Northwest**

- c) Time to revisit **Human Rights Campaign's** membership. HRC has recently passed a new policy: *"HRC Board ENDA Policy: It's the policy of HRC that the organization will only support an inclusive ENDA. In 2007 House leadership informed us that there were insufficient votes to pass an inclusive bill, so they decided to vote on a sexual orientation only bill. We made a one time exception to our policy in 2007 because we strongly believed that supporting this vote would do more to advance inclusive legislation. We will not support such a strategy again. We look forward to Congress sending President Obama a fully inclusive ENDA for his signature."* Their 2007 position on ENDA, the federal Employment Non-discrimination Act, conflicted with their commitment to Safe Schools Coalition's mission ("helping schools to become safe places where every family can belong, *where every educator can teach* and where every child can learn, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity"). That conflict precipitated our decision in early 2008 to suspend HRC's membership in the Coalition "to give HRC some time to demonstrate its commitment to the Coalition's mission".

We need to decide what to do. We decided to put off a vote until the next meeting. If you feel strongly about this issue please come to the next SSC meeting so your voice will be heard – or contact Gabi in advance (she is Membership Chair) to let her know how you feel about it: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/contact/?id=2>. Everyone in the room felt that HRC has done what we expressed needed to be done and thus, should be reinstated – that we want to send a clear message we aren't being capricious about it -- but it was felt that there have many players involved in this process and they should all have a voice in this decision.

- d) Progress on invoicing member orgs: Stefanie and Kathy are merging data and writing a 2009 renewal reminder letter to member organizations and are hoping to send them in the next week or two.
- e) **HELP NEEDED: Gabi, Stefanie and Kathy would love help with the database - if you have software/database experience please volunteer to help out! Contact Gabi to volunteer:** <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/contact/?id=2>
- f) **Please, if you represent a member org or an org that *should* be a member of the Safe Schools Coalition**, save us having to contact you to remind you to renew or join. **Renew or join for 2009 online right now: (Don't worry -- you don't need your agency's credit card – you can ask, right on the form, to have an invoice sent to you!)**

(5) LISTSERVE REPORT – Beth

- a) **Welcome** to recent subscribers from:
- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| ▪ Seattle, WA (3) | ▪ Marysville, WA | ▪ Sacramento, CA |
| ▪ Jacksonville, FL | ▪ Lake Forest Park, WA | ▪ Milwaukee, WI |
| ▪ Olympia, WA (2) | ▪ Tacoma, WA | ▪ New York, NY |
| ▪ Everett, WA | ▪ Stillwater, OK | |
- b) Recently two Listserve volunteers have needed to step down. We want to thank Michelle Kline and Samantha Harris for their service. **HELP NEEDED: We need two volunteers, anywhere in the world with Internet access, to devote 2-4 hours/week to either job digests or digests of opinion (editorials, blogs) and right wing watch messages. Got 1-4 hours a week to donate to keep the list serve vibrant? Contact Beth:** <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/contact/?id=7>
- c) **There are two ways to subscribe.** Signing up for "IMPORTANT NEWS" gets you an average of 1-2 messages a week, mostly action items, meeting minutes and major announcements. Signing up for "NEWS" gets you those messages plus news, opinion, events and job digests totaling an average of 2 messages a day. Not subscribed? Need to change the address we send to or to switch lists? Go to: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/listsab.asp>

(6) FISCAL UPDATE – Beth, Kathy

- a) Thank you to recent donors:
 - **Kathleen Judd**
 - **Pam Jensen**
 - **Susan Kirchofer**
- b) And in memory of Jerry Painter: **Bainbridge Island Education Association ***
- c) **Make a tax deductible donation for 2009 right now. YOU are the main source of funding for the Coalition – IT is all of US. Go to:**
<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/donate.html>

(7) SPEAKERS BUREAU REPORT –Helen

- a) Recent speaking: Beth spoke with a Roosevelt HS student journalist on 3/13
- b) Upcoming speaking gigs: Reading Corps, MLK Vista, Leadership Conference @ Bush, WA Defender's Association, Morningside Academy
- c) Upcoming tabling gigs: 4/30 Westlake Homeless youth outreach fair, 5/28 & 29 Healthy Schools Summit, 5/8 Saying it Out Loud Conference, 6/8 & 9 Bullying Prevention Conference
- d) Recent American Friends Service Committee LGBTQ Youth Panels: 3/11, Best HS; 3/25 McIlvaigh MS; 4/8, Kitsap Safe Schools; 4/17, Cleveland HS
- e) Upcoming American Friends Service Committee LGBTQ Youth Panels: Washington MS, Odyssey HS, MLK, Vista
- f) **Job Announcement coming soon:** Safe Schools Coalition will be making a job announcement shortly, as Helen is stepping down from her Speakers' Bureau Coordinator responsibilities to go to graduate school-good luck Helen! Beth, Helen, and possibly Joyful will be writing up the job announcement for Helen's many hats. Watch the Listserve for the job announcement.

(8) SPECIAL EVENTS

- a) **Save the Date!! – May 17th, 2:00-5:00 p.m.** -- NW Premiere of ***Straightlaced—How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up*** to benefit the Safe Schools Coalition and the Respect for All Project at Groundspark. With support from the **Raynier Institute and Foundation**, at the theater at **Pacific Place** (6th and Pine) in Seattle, with a panel including students who are in the film and its director or producer and perhaps local youth as well, followed by a reception at **Il Fornaio** restaurant, downstairs – Tickets are \$4 for youths and school staff; \$5 general admission HYPERLINK "http://www.groundspark.org/straightlaced" \o "http://www.groundspark.org/straightlaced" www.groundspark.org/straightlaced in advance (\$8 and \$10 at the door) so get yours now here: <http://groundspark.org/2484> -- Riana
- b) **Save the Date!! -- June 23rd, 8:30-10 p.m.** -- **Laugh OUT Loud** all ages comedy night to benefit the Safe Schools Coalition, courtesy of the volunteer comics of **Nonprofit Comedy**, at the **Comedy Underground** (109 S Washington St) in Seattle. *The Stranger* has agreed to run the event in their Calendar. More about tickets next month. – Kyle

It was decided that funds raised at this event will go towards buying a plaque or some other award for Mt Si's GSA! For their perseverance, resilience, and ongoing struggle!
- c) **Save the Date!! – June 28th** -- **Seattle Pride Parade**. We will have out traditional yellow school bus in the parade. More about how to join the SSC contingent next month, but the bottom line is: any member org is welcome to ride on or walk with the bus, hang your banner on one or both sides of the bus, eat our food and drink our drinks, help staff the bus by handing out treats to the crowd, and help rock the bus and otherwise participate in the mayhem. – Lisa

(9) INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT – Penny

- a) Three interventions to report this month: One is a local 7th grader whose mother called in and is concerned about bullying at her school. A second is also local and involves inappropriate touching by an 18 year old. We had one intervention from Calif. requesting help in a private school. (We also sent bracelets and 2 posters to a GSA in Vancouver, B.C. and 2 interventions are ongoing as we are waiting for contact back from parents.)
- b) Tara Borelli of Lambda Legal, reports that Lambda has stepped in to send a letter of support to explain the law as it pertains to GSA's and students' constitutional right to freedom of speech to a principal in Oregon who was treating the Gay Straight Alliance much more restrictively than other clubs. Thank you, Lambda!
- c) One Intervention Specialist has needed to step down. Thank you to Barbara Clark-Elliot for your service to the Coalition! Penny is working with those who are already on a waiting list to fill Barb's volunteer slot, but **if you might be interested in volunteering with the Intervention Team (Thursday is the day we need to cover), please contact Penny: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/contact/?id=10>**

(10) LAW & POLICY WORK GROUP REPORT – Josh, Lonnie, Beth

- a) Washington State has amended its hate crimes or “**malicious harassment**” law to **explicitly encompass gender identity/expression-based crimes**. Equal Rights Washington has expressed appreciation to the Governor and to Rep. Joe McDermott, the bill's prime sponsor and the Washington Student Lobby, which spearheaded the lobbying effort. Since the anti-bullying law references the malicious harassment law, schools will need to amend their bullying policies to explicitly prohibit gender identity/expression-based harassment, bullying and intimidation, along with the forms of bullying they already prohibit. Beth agreed to contact OSPI and the Washington State Human Rights Commission to ask for a letter to school boards about the change.
- b) The Washington State **domestic partnership** law has been expanded by the House and Senate to include **all the remaining rights and responsibilities** associated with marriage except the word “marriage.” The bill awaits the Governor's signature. NOTE: We do anticipate that there will be an attempt to gather signatures to put an anti-domestic-partnership initiative on the ballot in November.
- c) Nationally, the **Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Act**, a.k.a. “Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act”, has now (April 29, 2009) passed the house and awaits passage in the Senate. Current federal hate crimes law makes it unlawful to “willfully injure, intimidate or interfere with any person, or to attempt to do so, by force or threat of force, because of that other person's race, color, religion or national origin and because of his/her activity as one of the following:
 - o A student at or applicant for admission to a public school or public college
 - o A participant in a benefit, service, privilege, program, facility or activity provided or administered by a state or local government
 - o An applicant for private or state employment; a private or state employee; a member or applicant for membership in a labor organization or hiring hall; or an applicant for employment through an employment agency, labor organization or hiring hall
 - o A juror or prospective juror in state court
 - o A traveler or user of a facility of interstate commerce or common carrier
 - o A patron of a public accommodation or place of exhibition or entertainment, including hotels, motels, restaurants, lunchrooms, bars, gas stations, theaters, concert halls, sports arenas or stadiums.” [Downloaded 5/5/09 from <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/crim/245.php>]

“The Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Act would strengthen existing federal hate crime laws in three ways:

- ~ Expand the law to authorize the Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute certain bias-motivated crimes based on the victim's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability. Current law only includes race, color, religion or national origin.
- ~ Eliminate a serious limitation on federal involvement under existing law which requires that a victim of a bias-motivated crime was attacked because he/she was engaged in a specified federally-protected activity such as voting, serving on a jury or attending school.
- ~ Add "gender" and "gender identity" to the Hate Crimes Statistics Act" [downloaded 5/5/09 from http://www.matthewshepard.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Erase_Hate_Crimes_Legislation]

(11) HEALTHY YOUTH SURVEY – Beth

- a) We are among those proposing 4 questions be added re: sexual health.
- b) We decided that SSC will request that a sexual orientation question be added and that a gender identity question should be added, too, but that the two shouldn't be conflated into one survey item. If we can get one added to the 2010 survey we'll go back during the next cycle to request the other one again. Beth will draft up the request and those that were in attendance will edit.

(13) RAPID RESPONSE – Heather C.

A group convened recently, spearheaded by GroundSpark, to look at how to respond to safe schools controversy when it comes up. **Their working definition of this is: A decision is being made, or an anti-LGBT harassment event occurred, that has sparked an escalating public dialogue being covered in the media.** They decided to focus on the immediate aftermath of an event when it happens and ongoing negotiations after a controversy since other groups are focusing on education and training (including SSC). They brainstormed what's helpful in controversy, functions, the goals of the group, resources, their purpose statement (which is: To assist and advise with the legal, political, communications and community mobilizing needs of (public and private) PreK-12 schools, school districts, school communities, and other educational entities when there is a controversy related to LGBT-inclusion in schools), If you're interested in the work they're doing consider joining their steering committee or the interim action team. For more information, contact Heather Carter, who is representing SSC on the Rapid Response team: heather@yspp.org

UPCOMING MEETINGS ... contact the chair if you have agenda items to suggest or if you need instructions about attending (in person) or calling in (by conference call). All are welcome- you do NOT need to be a Coalition member to attend.

May 19th, 3-5 pm, Pacific Time. Heather Murphy facilitates and Heather Carter records
Heather M.: 206-616-6361; hmurphy@u.washington.edu

June 16th, 3-5 pm, Pacific Time. Kyle facilitates and Matt records
Kyle: 206-322-6711 ext 32190; krapinan@casey.org

July 21st, 2-4 pm [summer hours], Pacific Time. Stefanie facilitates and Daniel records
Stefanie: 206-263-8936; stefanie.fox@kingcounty.gov

* The letter that accompanied the Bainbridge Island Ed Assn's donation in Jerry's name:

To the Folks at Safe Schools Coalition,

Please accept this contribution to your fine work in the name of the wonderful soul, Jerry Painter. He was critical to us in many legal sticky-wickets ~ his advice always based on deep knowledge and wisdom. His humor was shared with such enthusiasm that it was terribly contagious. But it was his passion for RESPECT AND KINDNESS for ALL students, staff and parents that opened doors, minds and hearts like no other single person who worked with Bainbridge Island in a leadership role, like Jerry did.

May your coalition continue to thrive and liberate others in Jerry's spirit.

With appreciative hearts,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Boo Schneider". The signature is written in black ink and has a fluid, personal style.

The Bainbridge Island Education Association
Boo Schneider, President