



## BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS MONTHLY EMAIL UPDATE

October 2007

Dear Educators,

Welcome to the October 2007 edition of the Building Inclusive Schools Monthly Email Update! The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is pleased to provide this service to educators across the Commonwealth to support your efforts at fostering respectful and affirming school communities. As always, feel free to contact our office by phone at (804) 515-7950 or by emailing Jonathan Zur, Vice President for Program Operations, at [jjur@inclusiveva.org](mailto:jjur@inclusiveva.org) if we can provide more direct support of your work. You may also visit us online at <http://www.inclusiveva.org>.

### **IN THIS EMAIL:**

- (1) Resources List: Sexual Orientation**
- (2) Action Plan Profile**
- (3) Program Spotlight: Educator Professional Development**
- (4) Current Events: The Jena 6**
- (5) Essay & Creative Expression Contests**

### **--- RESOURCES LIST: SEXUAL ORIENTATION ---**

This month's Resources List focuses on sexual orientation. Check out page 3 for information on "ready-made" diversity programs for schools, potential funding sources, curriculum ideas, reports, and more. Please also pass along resources you know for use in future emails!

### **--- ACTION PLAN PROFILE ---**

Each month, we seek to profile activities taking place in Virginia high schools that promote inclusion, challenge assumptions, and advance understanding. As you hold programs in your school throughout the year, please share information about them to be included in future monthly email updates! This month, we share information about a sample activity that can be used in schools called the "S-4 Campaign." Started at an independent school in New Jersey, S-4 stands for "Stop Saying Stupid Stuff." At the school, workshops were held for students and educators to develop skills for interrupting statements of bullying and prejudice, and participants were then given S-4 pins to wear in the building. They then became visible advocates for a more respectful school environment, and had skills to act in positive and proactive ways. Please contact the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities for more information about the S-4 campaign, or for assistance in developing a similar program in your school.

### **--- PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ---**

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is pleased to work with schools to offer professional development programs for educators. Aimed at increasing individuals' sensitivity to and awareness of diversity issues, we provide skills and resources for educators to create classrooms and schools free from the distractions created by prejudice, stereotypes, and bigotry. Focus can be placed on a particular area of diversity (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) or professional development sessions can broadly consider such areas as the roots and nature of prejudice, bullying and harassment, how to analyze lesson plans, curricula, and school politics to ensure that they are culturally responsive, or identifying strategies to respond to incidents of intolerance and bigotry in schools. For more information on how the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities can work with your school, simply reply to this email.



**--- CURRENT EVENTS: THE JENA 6 ---**

Tolerance.org has created a resource guide for educators related to the “Jena 6” case in Louisiana . Included at <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?ar=867> is information about how to examine your school climate, respond to incidents of bias, and ways to teach about the Jena 6 in the classroom. View the Table of Contents on the right side of the webpage for additional links and resources.

**--- ESSAY & CREATIVE EXPRESSION CONTESTS ---**

Several national contests have been announced that relate to building inclusive schools! Please consider including your students in the following opportunities:

- (1) No Name Calling Week Creative Expression Contest (*Deadline: November 20, 2007*)  
<http://www.nonamecallingweek.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/news/record/57.html>
- (2) First Freedom Student Competition (*Deadline: December 1, 2007*)  
<http://www.firstfreedom.org/education/students.html>
- (3) The Sikh Coalition Diversity Essay Contest (*Deadline: February 1, 2008*)  
<http://www.sikhcoalition.org/essay.asp>

## SCHOOL RESOURCES LIST

*Focus: Sexual Orientation • October 2007*

### **CURRICULUM** *[Ways to integrate human relations issues into education]*

#### **How Does Homophobia Hurt Us All?**

[http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN\\_ATTACHMENTS/file/241-1.pdf](http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ATTACHMENTS/file/241-1.pdf)

#### **Is Everyone Protected by the Bill of Rights?**

<http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/lessons/billofrights/b.html#steps>

#### **Lesson Plans for Elementary, Middle, and High School Teachers**

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

### **PROGRAMS** *[Initiatives and observances to advance character education]*

#### **Ally Week** – October 14-20, 2007

<http://www.dayofsilence.org/ally.html>

#### **Mix It Up Day** – November 13, 2007

<http://www.tolerance.org/teens>

#### **No Name-Calling Week** – January 21-25, 2008

<http://www.nonamecallingweek.org>

#### **Day of Silence** – April 25, 2008

<http://www.dayofsilence.org>

### **ARTICLES & RESEARCH** *[News for sharing with colleagues or as classroom discussion topics]*

#### **Just the Facts about Sexual Orientation & Youth:**

#### **A Primer for Principals, Educators, and School Personnel**

<http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbc/facts.pdf>

#### **Public Schools and Sexual Orientation: A First Amendment Framework for Finding Common Ground**

[http://www.ceai.org/post\\_file/public\\_schools\\_and\\_sexual\\_orientation.pdf](http://www.ceai.org/post_file/public_schools_and_sexual_orientation.pdf)

#### **What One Teacher Can Do**

[http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN\\_ATTACHMENTS/file/118-1.pdf](http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ATTACHMENTS/file/118-1.pdf)

### **FUNDING** *[Grant opportunities to recognize individual leadership or support class projects and clubs]*

**Pay It Forward Mini-Grants** – fund one-time-only service-oriented projects to benefit a school or community. Projects must contain a “pay it forward” focus, based on the concept of one person doing a favor for others, who in turn do favors for others, with the results growing exponentially

Deadline: October 15, 2007

*Up to \$500 Grants*

<http://www.payitforwardfoundation.org/educators/grant.html>

**Teaching Tolerance Grant Program** – offers grants to K-12 classroom teachers for implementing tolerance and youth activism projects in their schools and communities

*Up to \$2,500 Grants*

<http://www.tolerance.org/teach/grants/guide.jsp>