

Day of Silence

Students at secondary schools throughout School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) to take part in a Day of Silence.

Get ready for the campus to be a little quieter. Greater Victoria students will join students across the nation in a Day of Silence to protest the discrimination, harassment and abuse, in effect the silencing, faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students and their allies in schools. Reynolds, Esquimalt, Mount Douglas, and Spectrum Secondary Schools will participate on April 16, 2008. Lambrick Park and Oak Bay Secondary Schools will participate on April 24, 2008 and May 13, 2008.

The Day of Silence will be held during school hours at each of the participating schools. According to a local organizer, over 800 participants will maintain their silence throughout the day, wearing stickers and passing out speaking cards that read:

"Please understand my reasons for not speaking today. I am participating in the Day of Silence, a national youth movement protesting the silence faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their allies in schools. My deliberate silence echoes that silence, which is caused by harassment, prejudice, and discrimination. I believe that ending the silence is the first step toward fighting these injustices. Think about the voices you are not hearing today. What are you going to do to end the silence?"

It is the hope of the participants that the event will work towards ending some of the silence and hatred that students face. The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network's (GLSEN) 2003 National School Climate Survey found that more than four out of five LGBT students report verbal, sexual or physical harassment at school and 29 percent report missing at least a day of school in the past month out of fear for their personal safety. The Day of Silence is one way students and their allies are making anti-LGBT bullying, harassment and name-calling unacceptable in schools.

About the Day of Silence

The Day of Silence is a nationwide, student-led event during which hundreds of high schools, colleges, and universities take action to bring awareness to the bullying, name-calling, and harassment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender and ally (LGBTQA) youth. For more information, and a complete collection of organizing materials, visit www.dayofsilence.org

For further information contact:

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