

# Out with LGBTQ bullying

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Imagine, for a moment, how it feels to be verbally or physically assaulted on a regular basis. In families, it's considered domestic abuse. In workplaces, it's labeled harassment. Both are punishable by law.

At schools, when kids are hurled insults or turned into human punching bags, such verbal and [physical abuse](#) is called [bullying](#).

While incessant ridicule and bodily attacks can be crippling in a young person's journey towards self-realization, school bullying is largely unreported and unpunished. It remains closeted when victims fear further exposure or added reprisals from tormentors.

Systematic cruelty – because of creed, color, weight or sexual orientation – continues when peers or educators turn a blind eye.

Peer harassment also transpires when kids are shunned or ignored at school. And bullying doesn't stop when class is over. The internet age has enabled harassment to merge online, where bullies deride their victims in anonymity.

For teenagers who discover they might be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer (LGBTQ), harassment can be a particularly insidious part of the educational process.

That's why Elizabeth Meyer, from the Concordia University Department of Education, authored a book to end teen torment called *Gender, Bullying and Harassment: Strategies to End Sexism and Homophobia* in

Schools (Teacher's College Press).

The stark circumstance of LGBTQ youth also prompted Dr. Meyer to unite with a group of Concordia students and professors to create a new YouTube video to advocate against school bullying.

Inspired by the "It Gets Better Project" – a new social movement that aims to give hope to LGBTQ youth – Concordia has become the first Quebec university to record a YouTube stand against queer bullying and the video reinforces the messages contained in Meyer's book.

Concordia, however, tweaked the formula as "Education makes it better." The core message is that by educating teachers and society, by reporting and stopping [harassment](#), everyone can make a difference to end school bullying.

**More information:** Elizabeth Meyer's Gender, Bullying and Harassment: Strategies to End Sexism and Homophobia in Schools [store.tcpres.com/0807749532.shtml](http://store.tcpres.com/0807749532.shtml)

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