

# BENDING THE MOLD

## AN ACTION KIT FOR TRANSGENDER STUDENTS

Transgender and gender-nonconforming students come out every day all over the country, and they deserve to be treated with respect and fairness. Some schools are already supportive of gay, lesbian and bisexual students, but need more education around transgender issues. Other schools discourage diversity in both sexual orientation and gender identity, and suppress or punish certain forms of gender expression. But transgender people of all ages are steadily organizing, advocating and winning legal battles, and those victories are strengthening our successes in the classroom. Transgender and gender-nonconforming youth are a key part of the transgender rights movement, and momentum is building. Our voices can be heard everywhere.

At the same time, violence against transgender and gender-nonconforming

students is an ever-present danger. The February 12, 2008 shooting of Lawrence King, a gender-nonconforming junior high school student in Oxnard, California, was a tragic reminder of the hate and fear that still haunt us.

Whether you're transgender or gender-nonconforming, questioning or an ally, this kit is designed to help you make your school a safer place. We've included ideas and information to help you advocate for change. There's also an extensive list of resources to help you connect with the transgender community and find support.

Our rights are most valuable when we know about them and use them. Use the information in this kit to get started, and reach out to each other — and Lambda Legal — for help. The world is changing, one voice at a time.

A May 2007 Gallup poll found that 68 percent of people are in favor of expanding federal hate crimes laws to cover sexual orientation, gender and gender identity.

*In Focus: Hate Crimes, Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, [www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)*

The total number of victims reporting anti-LGBTQ violence in 2007 was 2,430. Two hundred and eighty-eight (16%) of the total incidents reported in 2007 were, in whole or in part, transgender-specific.

*Anti-Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Violence in 2007, A Report of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, [www.ncavp.org](http://www.ncavp.org)*