

To Whomever This May Concern-

In life we are always after making a positive impact. . .for almost everything we do! One of the biggest situations we've had to deal with to date is respecting of differences between people in all of society. Right now I will be talking about how I have found that people in our communities have learned not to respect people or those with different sexual orientation (G, L, B, T, Q). As you all know, . . . There has been an on running . . .how should I put it. . .indifference, between societies Queer or Gay/Homosexual intellectuals and those heterosexual intellectuals that stand before us.

I have been part of this impact & I do believe that society still has many steps to becoming a more as we'll call it "Safe Environment" & a (n) accepting one also. I am only a high school student. . .but I've been able to experience the impact that different people have laid onto society today. It has not been an easy road for me; I have been impacted in both positive and negative ways. & I can tell you now, most of the time the stuff I heard from others and the stuff I felt inside was not good. It made me feel like I was to be looked at as lower class in everything in (school, at home, in sports) everything. It made me feel horrible as if I should not have been living on this planet. & Let me tell you I don't want to see other people suffer in ways I have seen in the past and that is why I am here to stand-up for myself and those like myself. . .and why I am standing up for the rights we earned. . .for being citizens of the United States, but that we have yet to fully receive!

Now I am standing-up for myself... for my rights as a human being and for who I really am as a person. Why do things have to be so different between us? As a full nation we should unite as one organization. That will except anyone for their differences, anyone that has lived their life's hiding in shame, & those who live in terror of what they know could happen to them at any moment in time!

Everyone should stand-up as one socially acceptable community & nothing less!

I am here to hear the stories of others.. .to listen to what "YOU" have to say & to only take sides with you to create a more equal acceptance in life. But like many of you, I am here to tell my story also, & I just want you to sit back, listen, & understand what it is I have to say. The struggles that I, & many of my peers are put through everyday.

I do not sit through school to be educated in the subjects we are taught.. .NO! I sit through school to be educated on all of life & it's many hardships. I sit through school to be educated on what will and has happened to past diverse students and humans throughout the world. I sit to learn more about, myself and what I can do as a person to create a safer environment for the many people to come after me.

I look at society & see only people that consider others to be "inhuman"...

Tyra Hunter

On August 7th, 1995, O 24-year old transgendered woman, named Tyra Hunter, was seriously injured in a hit & run car accident. Paramedics arrived on the scene & began treating Tyra for her injuries. When they discovered that she had a penis they stopped providing assistance & began to ridicule her. Horrified bystanders finally notified a supervisor who resumed treating her as soon as he arrived: however, Tyra died in hospital shortly after being transported there. The results of an internal investigation by the fire department were stated in a brief press release: they could not determine what had happened at the scene of the accident, despite the presence of 8 eyewitnesses
-Califia (1998, p. 233 }

then I look at my life & the people within my life that have almost fully accepted me as I am. But yet they have, their own reasoning as to why they are held back from totally accepting me as a person and a human being.. ..As I go on tryng to live my own life!

To most of my friends I am seen as a "normal" teen! But now I ask you, what is a "normal" teen? What is "normal" in general? How can any one person define "normal"? & Last but certainly not least,. .Can you really tell me who is "normal" and who is not! I'll tell you what I think; I think that no one could totally define "normal" to just one standard point. I believe there is no way to actually define that word we call "normal". To be "normal" I think all you got to do is be yourself & be outgoing about the way you want your life to be. That is how everyone can be "normal" to themselves as well as to others!

I've heard stories of people who have made positive impacts on their life and lives of others also, and I got to tell you that some of the things I heard.. .where upsetting. For example I talked to a close friend that will remain un-named. But like a week and a half ago (4/23) she was fired from a job and almost killed by one of her co-workers cause of her sexual orientation. Now tell me.

Does that seem fair to you? But yet she did nothing to get back, or revolt against the people who were at the time tormenting her. She only stated one quote, which I do believe many of us have heard.. ."Treat others the way you want to be treated in return!" But I can tell you that when I first heard this from her I was horrified, and she had a really hard time telling me the full details of the situation. But from this and reading through some books I found ways that we could make some places in life seem a little more respectful and safe for everyone, This is what I found:

Lets begin in your home:

- Speak out against jokes & slurs that target people or groups. Silence sends a message that you are in agreement. It is not enough to refuse to laugh.

I do believe that if you are not able to stand up for others that it will be harder for you to stand up for yourself later on in life.

- Be knowledgeable; provide as much accurate info as possible to reject harmful myths &/or stereotypes.

If your not able to correct someone's mistake then It could cause great pain to someone that you are close to or even yourself.

- Parents should be encouraging their kids to learn or read up in books that promote understanding of diversity or the different abilities of people.

Schools: [this may take more time but use these idea's...)

- Establish a(n) understanding diversity club that serves as a(n) umbrella organization to promote harmony & respect for those with differences in life.
- Form a student-faculty to create "rules of respect" for your schools.

This will in time promote more of the safe schools thought in a(n) everyday student.

- Host a poetry slam in which students read aloud original: Poems, Raps, etc... that breaks down stereotypes & promotes respect for diversity.
- Devise a skit contest with themes that promote diversity.

I have found that out in everyday society and schools are two of the places where we find that most diversity issues arise. Thus being if we look at a future of correction we could look at a

future with less confusion and more happiness. From not only me or you or just one plain person.
But from all of us as one student body or just one united place.