



# International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia ('IDAHO' - May 17)

## Media Release

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### **IDAHO campaign puts discrimination in education into the spotlight**

School is often **the most difficult environment** for LGBT students throughout the world. **Bullying** has been found to reduce school attendance and lead to early dropout and poorer academic performance and achievement. It can also adversely affect young people's mental and psychological health, leaving permanent scars and often leading to suicide. Research in the US has shown that students who are bullied at school are more than twice as likely to attempt suicide than students who are not bullied.

This year's **IDAHO campaign** – “**Fighting homo/transphobia IN and THROUGH education**” - is placing the issue of bullying into the spotlight and mobilizing global support to raise awareness and promote a safer and better environment for students the world over.

Initiatives and events are being implemented throughout Europe, North and South America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, from grassroots actions to activities at the highest level internationally.

In Asia, for example, the **Indonesian** LGBTIQ Forum will draw attention to the issues by embarking on a “road show” in schools and universities across the country. In **Vietnam**, the Sexual Rights Alliance has developed a series of activities, including an online survey on homo/transphobic bullying in schools, research at elementary and secondary schools on bullying, and a performance and exhibition in universities to promote LGBT rights.

In **Britain**, Stonewall has mobilized its Schools Champions Program around IDAHO. In **Australia**, Safe School Coalition Victoria has launched a photographic contest and developed a special toolkit for IDAHO. Across the Tasman, Family Planning **New Zealand** has developed a nationwide anti-bullying program for IDAHO.

In **Italy**, the city of Torino is organizing a special training session on homophobic bullying in schools for regional and local school managers and principals. In **Cuba**, awareness-raising activities on homophobia in higher education and the need for comprehensive sexual education will take place in universities nationwide. In **Montenegro**, an “LGBT Diary Action” to gather voices against homophobic bullying has been launched.

And on May 16 - the eve of IDAHO - **UNESCO** is launching the "Good Policy and Practice in HIV and Health Education – Booklet 8: Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying". The publication builds on the findings of the first ever International Consultation on Homophobic Bullying in Educational Institutions held under the auspices of the United Nations, convened by UNESCO in December 2011.

These are but a few of the events and activities that will be taking place on and around May 17. A **full list is available at IDAHO website** (<http://www.dayagainsthomophobia.org>) and on the ‘Worldwide Voices Against Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying’ **Facebook page** (<https://www.facebook.com/VoicesAgainstBullying>).

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