



Youth Action & Policy Association (NSW) Inc

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MEDIA RELEASE

Re: Proud Schools Pilot Project

The peak body representing young people in NSW is highly supportive of any intervention that aims to eradicate homophobic bullying and abuse in schools.

The Youth Action and Policy Association NSW (YAPA) welcomes the Proud Schools project and highlights the need for specific policies addressing homophobia in NSW schools.

Alexandra Long, YAPA's Western Sydney Project Coordinator, stated that "same sex attracted students have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from homophobic bullying and harassment."

"Many same sex attracted young people report being bullied and the majority of the bullying occurs at school. We have a responsibility to our young people to stamp out this sort of abuse."

The negative effects of homophobic bullying on students are well documented and YAPA believes the Proud Schools project is a positive step to ensuring same sex attracted young people are safe at school.

YAPA supports the introduction of a policy with clear guidelines for school communities in dealing with homophobia and supporting sexual diversity.

Recent research by YAPA has found that same sex attracted young people are over twice as likely to suffer depression and anxiety than heterosexual young people.

"They are also up to 40% more likely to attempt suicide" stated Alex Long. "4 out of 5 young same sex attracted young people who are bullied experience it at school, so it's the ideal place to make a difference in these young people's lives."

For further comment, please contact:

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