



Workshop - Homophobic Bullying and Hate Crime

A video called "Living it" which was produced by Bolton PCT and GMP was shown.

There was discussion around what could constitute homophobic bullying. Suggestions included:

- Verbal abuse and name calling
- Physical attacks
- Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual abuse
- Perceptions (Transgender/others)
- Age young to age old
- Easy target – harassment and intimidation
- Abused because of difference

One definition may be any bullying that takes place because a person is gay, is perceived to be gay, is friends with someone who is gay, is the parent of someone who is gay and so on.....

The group discussed why there is a need to talk about homosexuality with young people:

- They are already talking about it amongst themselves and have the right to accurate information.
- Bullying in schools frequently uses homophobic insults and teachers may be unable to help/turn a blind eye or even be perpetrators themselves.
- Lesbian and gay pupils may need more support in school. 50% of young gay and lesbian people have problems at school and 1 in 5 suffers post traumatic stress in later life.
- Parents may want to talk about homosexuality but feel inhibited. Young gay and lesbian people may feel isolated and may not have a friend or family member they feel they can talk to.
- Religious schools do not always know how to deal with such bullying.
- Sexual health education needs to include information about gay sex and health.

Homophobia is a fear of or hostility towards homosexuals or homosexuality. It may be expressed visibly, audibly and sometimes violently. Several points were raised during the workshop and are set out below:

- Someone who is gay may be constantly coming to terms with it and is vulnerable to bullying throughout life.
- The older gay community may be vulnerable because they are unaware of services that are provided or are frightened/unwilling to access them.



- Verbal bullying can be as bad or worse than physical bullying.
- Society encourages people to be anti gay although this is slowly changing – for example in Manchester or London it is more common to see same sex couples holding hands etc (although outside the large cities this may still not be the case).
- There was previously a view that if you were not married with 2.4 kids there was something wrong with you. However, there are now many different kinds of relationship and other things such as career may now take precedence for some people.
- Heterosexuals do not have to “come out!” People do not know how to treat someone who is not married.
- Attitudes change over time in different places and cultures. People experience different attitudes and treatment.