

March 25, 2012

To: Texas Sikh Sangat
Re: School Bullying Survey

ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤ ਜੀ।

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ
ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ॥

ਸਿੱਖ ਕੋਲੀਸ਼ਨ ਯੂਨਾਈਟਡ ਸਟੇਟਸ (ਅਮਰੀਕਾ) ਦਾ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡਾ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਗਰਿਕ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ (ਸਿਵਲ ਰਾਈਟਸ) ਦਾ ਸੰਗਠਨ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਨਾਲ ਪੂਰੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਰਵੇਖਣ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ, ਇਹ ਜਾਨਣ ਲਈ ਕਿ ਕੀ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਜਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਕੀ “ਬੁਲਿੰਗ” ਤਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ। ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਨੀਤੀ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝੀ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਗਰਿਕ ਅਧਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਕਰਨ। ਸਿੱਖ ਕੋਲੀਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰਾਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਤੇ ਸਰਵੇਖਣ ਦੇ ਹੇਠਲੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਨਤੀਜੇ ਹਨ:

Highlights

- Total Number of Youth Anonymously Surveyed: **296**
- Average Age of Youth Anonymously Surveyed: **11.5**
- Percentage Teased at School Because of Sikh/Punjabi Identity: **32.4%**
- Percentage Hit or Touched at School Without Permission: **21%**

The following anonymous survey responses illustrate the nature of bullying and harassment experienced by Sikh youth at schools in Texas.

- “[They] called me terrorist & called me names for [the] past 4 [years]” – Male, aged 17
- “Two kids took my patka off.” – Male, aged 12
- “[They] think I’m a terrorist from 9/11.” – Female, aged 13
- “People always say to cut my hair and also a lot of people pull my hair and make fun of my name.” – Female, aged 9

Recommendations

1. Build Relationships with School Officials

The Sikh Coalition recommends that the Sikh community of Texas bring issues of teasing, bullying, and harassment of Sikh youth to the attention of local and state school officials. For example, the following state official can be contacted directly:

Mr. Robert Scott
Commissioner of Education
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas, 78701
Phone: (512) 463-9734 | Email: commissioner@tea.state.tx.us

2. Ask School Officials to Adopt Strong Anti-Bullying Policies

The Sikh Coalition recommends that the Sikh community of Texas work with state and local school officials to promote stronger anti-bullying policies. A strong policy includes clear prohibitions on bullying and harassment, as well as data collection requirements; a process for students to report bullying incidents; and diversity appreciation programs for students and staff. The Sikh Coalition can provide copies of model anti-bullying policies upon request.

3. Ask Government Officials to Support Strong Anti-Bullying Laws

The Sikh Coalition recommends that the Sikh community of Texas work with government officials to promote anti-bullying laws. For example, the Sikh Coalition is a strong supporter of the Safe Schools Improvement Act—proposed federal legislation that would require schools and school districts to collect and publicize data about bullying incidents. The following government officials can be contacted and encouraged to support this important legislation:

U.S. Senator John Cornyn
<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/public/>
Phone: (202) 224-2934

U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison
<http://www.hutchison.senate.gov/>
Phone: (202) 224-5922

For more information about this survey, or to support our efforts to combat school bullying, please contact Manpreet Kaur (manpreet.sikhcoalition@gmail.com) or Harmeet Kaur (harmmeet.sikhcoalition@gmail.com).

Respectfully submitted,

THE SIKH COALITION