

October 10, 2011

To: New England 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: **39**
- Average Age of Youth Anonymously Surveyed: **11.4**
- Percentage Teased at School Because of Sikh/Punjabi Identity: **38.5%**
- Percentage Hit or Touched at School Without Permission: **23%**

The following anonymous survey responses illustrate the nature of bullying and harassment experienced by Sikh youth at schools in your area:

- *“I have been teased on the bus and [in] school. Some people touch my turban and make fun of me.”*  
– Male, aged 7
- *“I was made fun of every day and [called names]. I had to live through this for 2 years.”*  
– Male, aged 15
- *“I was teased because of my long hair.”* – Female, aged 10
- *“[My] turban was taken off, [and my] joora was squeezed.”* – Male, aged 10

## Recommendations

### **1. Build Relationships with School Officials**

The Sikh Coalition recommends that the Sikh community of New England bring issues of teasing, bullying, and harassment of Sikh youth to the attention of state and local school officials. For example, based on our survey results, the following school official can be contacted in Massachusetts:

Ms. Anne Gilligan  
[agilligan@doe.mass.edu](mailto:agilligan@doe.mass.edu)  
Coordinator – Safe and Drug Free Schools  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

### **2. Ask School Officials to Adopt and Properly Implement Strong Anti-Bullying Policies**

The Sikh Coalition recommends that the Sikh community of New England work with state and local school officials to promote and properly implement strong 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.

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

The Sikh Coalition recommends that the Sikh community of New England work with federal 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 official can be contacted and encouraged to support this important legislation:

U.S. Senator Scott Brown  
<http://scottbrown.senate.gov/public/>  
(617) 565-3170

For more information about this survey, or to support our efforts to combat school bullying, please contact Sikh Coalition Volunteer Advocate Kaviraj Singh ([kaviraj.sikhcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:kaviraj.sikhcoalition@gmail.com)).

Respectfully submitted,

THE SIKH COALITION