

# About.com GLBT Teens

## Introducing the First GLBTQ Online High School

A Q & A With Founder David Glick

By [Ellen Friedrichs](#), About.com Guide

Opened in January 2010, GLBTQ Online is just what it sounds like: [a high school conducted entirely over the Internet](#)<sup>1</sup> and designed for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning students.

David Glick, the new school's founder and Executive Director took the time to answer some questions about virtual school life and why Facebook proves that community doesn't only come from face time.



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### **How many students do you have currently enrolled? How many could you accommodate?**

We started two months ago with just a small handful of students. For our first full year next year, we expect 50-100 students. Our enrollment cap for the first few years is 500 students.

### **Do students need parent's permission to attend?**

Students under the age of 18 need [parent](#)<sup>2</sup> or guardian permission. We will assist with student-parent discussions as necessary, and can help connect families to resources that can further support the family. We have also had many inquiries from potential students over the age of 18 or even older than 21. We have no upper age limit since we are not bound by public school funding laws.

### **Are there opportunities for students to meet teachers or peers in person?**

Yes, geography permitting, of course. As we grow, we anticipate clusters of students in various cities around the country. Those clusters will provide opportunities for both social and academic gatherings. In addition, we have launched [QAMP!](#)<sup>3</sup> a week-long summer camp for queer-identifying youth and their siblings. Although campers do not need to be students of the school, we anticipate some overlap.

### **Can you accommodate non-GLBTQ teens?**

Certainly! We are happy to work with all teens friendly to the GLBTQ community, including straight teens and especially those who may be [questioning their gender or sexuality](#)<sup>4</sup> but aren't sure if they fit into any category. Besides, we know of no test that identifies such teens or would provide such filtering, even if we wanted to!

### **How do you respond to the idea that online high schools thwart a teen's ability to socialize or deal with interpersonal challenges?**

School is just one part of a teen's life, and they will find many other ways to socialize face-to-face. In addition, today's teens are very accustomed to developing relationships and socializing in online environments. Facebook doesn't have 350 million users because it's socially isolating! People flock to Facebook to develop friends all over the

world. An online school provides that same opportunity to connect with peers around the world.

### **What about the notion that [GLBT schools](#)<sup>5</sup> "segregate" gay teens and don't prepare them for hostilities that they may encounter in the "real" world?**

Adolescence is a particularly difficult time for queer youth. We hope to give those youth who want it a safe place where they can focus on their education while also becoming comfortable with their own identities. This is something many adolescents take for granted but is not always available to queer youth. As students mature and become increasingly comfortable with themselves, they will become better equipped to encounter those hostilities. Additionally, unfortunately most students will have already experienced some of those hostilities long before they come to our school.

A similar question uses the term "isolation," as in "aren't we isolating them?" Many GLBTQ youth feel plenty isolated in their bricks & mortar schools, despite being surrounded by many people. We are not isolating them; we are [connecting them to a community](#)<sup>6</sup> that is positive and supportive. Some may not have that in their traditional schools. And our education might just be better than what they can get locally, too!

### **Who do you think would be an ideal candidate for GLBTQ Online High School?**

A student who is motivated to learn, committed to their education, and seeking peers, supportive services, teachers and administrators that don't just "tolerate" them, but truly embrace their individuality and their personal journeys.

*Interested in GLBTQ online high school? Find out more, where else? [Online](#).<sup>7</sup>*

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