



Anti-Homophobia in Sport Exhibition 2012

celebrating Inclusiveness – combating Prejudice

Homophobia in Sport – a brief overview of issues and challenges

Roars of excitement... Gasps of awe... Jubilant cheers... Tears of achievement.... Millions of us are inspired by the achievements of international Olympians. As well as being physical feats, through them we celebrate the magnificence of the human spirit.

As athletes from different countries, races and beliefs come together, we champion diversity and internationalism. It's also an opportunity to challenge prejudice.

Many of the very first Olympians in Ancient Greece were openly gay. Their sexuality was celebrated as the ultimate in brotherly love and devotion to a cause.

These days, it's a different story. In sports such as football, it is considered difficult to be openly gay. Homophobic abuse is rife on football's terraces. In the 1990s footballer Justin Fashanu faced taunts when he came out and was disowned by his footballer brother John. In 2008, Hampshire Police charged fans with homophobic and racist abuse directed at Sol Campbell. *"We don't care if you're hanging from a tree, cos you're a Judas cxxt with HIV,"* they taunted.

In other sports, things are improving. Recently rugby star Gareth Thomas and cricketer Steven Davies came out as gay and met with a positive response. The first NBA basketball player to come out as gay, the UK's John Ameachi, says it's important to speak out. *"The silence is what kills."*

Check this out ...

- Almost two-thirds of football fans believe football would be better if anti-gay abuse was eradicated
- The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games has joined football, rugby, cricket, tennis and other sports, and signed up to the government's Charter for Action to rid sport of homophobia

Please also visit PDF 3 at: <http://ahs-exhibition2012.co.uk/pdfs/Panel%20Three.pdf> – and for more about young people's testimonies see the surveys findings on the second part of PDF 1: <http://ahs-exhibition2012.co.uk/pdfs/Panel%20One.pdf>

Saying it loud



Anti-Homophobia in Sport Exhibition 2012

celebrating Inclusiveness – combating Prejudice

At school many gay and lesbian young people are put off PE. It's not uncommon for gay or lesbian young people to be banned from using changing rooms and made to use the toilets instead.

The commonly felt excess 'macho' atmosphere of male PE puts many young gay men off. As do the negative attitudes of homophobic teachers.

"Gays don't do PE... If I ever did it I would go in the girls group."

"I'm a fitness freak but I hate doing PE."

"It's too masculine. It makes you feel unsafe."

"I suffered a lot from a PE teacher who seemed to know I was gay and used to make me feel different and inferior in ways such as repeatedly not remembering my name. One or two pupils picked up on this and enjoyed making me suffer through name called: 'no name queer'."

