



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on October 19, 2012

Pro-Family Group Warns of Agenda Behind SPLC's "Mix It Up" Day

The [American Family Association](#) (AFA) is warning parents about an upcoming "entry level" diversity program being promoted by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) under its "Teaching Tolerance" project. On October 30, at over 2,000 schools across the nation, the SPLC will activate its annual [Mix It up at Lunch Day](#), which it describes as a campaign, established a decade ago, that "encourages students to identify, question and cross social boundaries."



The SPLC explains that in its surveys, "students have identified the cafeteria as the place where divisions are most clearly drawn. So on one day — October 30 this school year — we ask students to move out of their comfort zones and connect with someone new over lunch. It's a simple act with profound implications. Studies have shown that interactions across group lines can help reduce prejudice. When students interact with those who are different from them, biases and misperceptions can fall away."

According to the SPLC, the goal of the Mix It up Day (MIU) is to get students to reach out and dialogue with others they feel uncomfortable with, such as students from other cultures, races, and ethnicities. But in a recent [Action Alert](#), the AFA warned that the event is also a thinly disguised attempt to promote the homosexual lifestyle among elementary and junior high school students. "MIU is a project of the fanatical pro-homosexual group, Southern Poverty Law Center," the AFA explained. "This is the same organization that launched hateful and malicious rhetoric toward the Family Research Council just prior to the August shooting of a security guard by an SPLC sympathizer."

The AFA said the SPLC is using its MIU day "to bully-push its gay agenda, and at the same time intimidate and silence students who have a Biblical view of homosexuality." In a [follow-up alert](#) the AFA said that "many school administrators were offended to learn that their school was listed as a 'participating' school on the SPLC website and ordered it removed immediately. In some cases, students or teachers independently signed the school up without approval, leaving principals and superintendents unprepared for phone calls from concerned parents."

SPLC responded to the AFA's alerts with [one of its own](#), insisting that the AFA's description of the event as a promotion of homosexuality was an "out-and-out lie. As educators know, Mix It Up is a simple effort to get students to break through social boundaries and make new friends. Each school sets its own agenda, makes its own plans, and chooses its own theme." The SPLC also took the opportunity to make its own allegations, claiming that the AFA "specializes in demonizing the LGBT community and stirring up hate."

The AFA's Bryan Fischer said that the problem his group has with the event is that it fits nicely with efforts to normalize the homosexual lifestyle among school-age children. "You see the same thing happening with anti-bullying legislation," Fischer said. "It winds up being used as a hammer to silence Christian students who oppose normalization of homosexuality. If you say a word criticizing homosexual behavior, you get accused of hate speech."



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Fischer told the [New York Times](#) that “no one is in favor of anyone getting bullied for any reason, but these anti-bullying policies become a mechanism for punishing Christian students who believe that homosexual behavior is not something that should be normalized.”

Fischer noted that if Mix It Up Day were not about pushing a homosexual agenda, SPLC might easily have issued a disclaimer such as the one suggested by the AFA, to wit: “Mix It Up Day should not be construed as an endorsement of homosexual behavior, or to prohibit any student from raising sincere moral and health concerns about homosexuality.”

However, said Fischer, “they won’t do it ... because Mix It Up Day is in fact about normalizing homosexual behavior and punishing anyone who thinks that’s a bad idea.” He warned that MIU day “is not benign ... it’s like poisoned Halloween candy. The wrapper looks fine, it looks tasty, it looks harmless. You don’t realize how toxic it is until you have internalized it, and then it’s too late.”

For all its talk about tolerance and diversity, the SPLC has built a reputation for intolerance with the views of groups, such as the American Family Association, that emphasize the importance of a Judeo-Christian worldview and which object to the normalization of homosexual behavior. As reported by [The New American](#), in December 2010 the [SPLC published a list of groups](#) it accused of harboring “anti-gay” agendas by, among other acts, “pumping out demonizing propaganda aimed at homosexuals.” In addition to the AFA, among the conservative groups making the list were American Vision, Concerned Women for America, the Family Research Council, Liberty Counsel, and the National Organization for Marriage — all organizations making a principled stand for traditional family values and marriage. One conservative publication, the [Social Contract](#), noted in 2010 that even as the SPLC promotes itself as an anti-poverty crusader, it has been quietly amassing “\$200 million in ‘reserve funds’ that its secretive directors invest in hedge funds and offshore bank accounts in places like the Cayman Islands. The tax-exempt organization spends almost 90 percent of its revenue on ‘fund-raising and administrative costs’ and flunked an audit by the Better Business Bureau’s Wise Giving Alliance.”

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