

= Never Been Kissed (Glee) =

" Never Been Kissed " is the sixth episode of the second season of the American television series Glee , and the twenty @-@ eighth episode overall . It was written by Brad Falchuk , directed by Bradley Buecker and premiered on Fox on November 9 , 2010 . In " Never Been Kissed " , the glee club members are assigned a boys against girls singing competition . The bullying of club member Kurt Hummel (Chris Colfer) intensifies , but he meets a new ally in Blaine Anderson (Darren Criss) , the lead singer of a rival glee club . Puck (Mark Salling) is released from juvenile detention and forms a friendship with Artie Abrams (Kevin McHale) , and football coach Shannon Beiste (Dot @-@ Marie Jones) is hurt when she learns that several of the students are visualizing her to quell their amorous moods .

The episode began a story arc about bullying which spanned the remainder of the season . It coincided with a spate of suicides among bullied youths , which reportedly gave the cast and crew additional inspiration to do their best work . Six songs were covered ? four in the form of two mash @-@ ups ? and all were released as singles which charted on the Billboard Hot 100 . Critics were less enthused by the mash @-@ ups than the other performances ; Criss 's cover of " Teenage Dream " was particularly well @-@ received , and became the first Glee single to top the Billboard Digital Songs chart .

10 @.@ 99 million US viewers watched " Never Been Kissed " . It was one of six episodes that were submitted to the judges for Glee 's nomination in the Outstanding Comedy Series category at the 63rd Primetime Emmy Awards . Jones received an Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series nomination for her work on the show , and submitted this episode for judging . Reviewers approved of her performance but were very critical of her storyline and polarized by the plotting of the bullying story , though they generally approved of the episode 's Puck and Artie sub @-@ plot .

= = Plot = =

Glee club director Will Schuester (Matthew Morrison) announces the second New Directions boys against girls singing competition . He later sees a shaken Kurt Hummel in the hallway ? he had been slammed against a locker by school bully Dave Karofsky (Max Adler) ? and takes Kurt to his office to recover . Kurt criticizes both the school 's failure to act against homophobic bullying and the lack of challenge in the club 's competition ; Will decides to modify the assignment to have the teams perform songs by groups of the opposite gender . Kurt is happier with the new spin , but the other boys are unreceptive to his ideas for their team . Puck is especially dismissive , and suggests that he go spy on the Dalton Academy Warblers , one of their competitors at the forthcoming Sectionals round of show choir competition . The girls ' team decides on and sings a mash @-@ up of " Start Me Up / Livin ' on a Prayer " .

Kurt visits Dalton Academy , an all @-@ boys private school , and watches the Warblers perform " Teenage Dream " . He is befriended by lead singer Blaine Anderson , who is also gay and encourages Kurt to stand up for himself . The next time he is attacked by Karofsky , Kurt confronts him in the boys ' locker room , and as the argument intensifies he is kissed by Karofsky , which leaves Kurt stunned . After Kurt tells Blaine of this , he and Kurt later try to talk to Karofsky about the difficulties and confusion his homosexual feelings must be causing him , but he denies that anything happened and soon returns to bullying Kurt .

Puck has been granted early release from juvenile detention on the condition that he performs community service . He picks Artie Abrams , a paraplegic , to fulfill that service , and the two busk in the school courtyard . They sing a duet of " One Love / People Get Ready " while Puck surreptitiously intimidates their schoolmates into giving donations . He then helps Artie get back together with Brittany Pierce (Heather Morris) , by setting up a double date with them and Santana Lopez (Naya Rivera) . Puck 's caseworker Joan Martin (Michael Hyatt) had believed he was working to rehabilitate gang members , and tells him he will have to return to the detention center unless he finds an alternative type of service . Puck admits to Artie that despite his bravado , he was miserable when locked up and does not want to return ; Artie convinces him to complete the

required real community service and offers to tutor him in school .

Some members of New Directions , who need to cool their arousal while making out , discover that picturing football coach Shannon Beiste is very effective . When she finds out about their technique , Beiste is deeply hurt and submits her resignation . Will attempts to convince her to stay , and gives her a friendly kiss when she admits she has never been kissed . He then invites Beiste to watch the boys ' competition performance ; they apologize , dedicate their mash @-@ up of " Stop ! In the Name of Love / Free Your Mind " to her , and win her forgiveness .

= = Production = =

" Never Been Kissed " was written by series co @-@ creator Brad Falchuk , directed by Bradley Buecker , and premiered on November 9 , 2010 . It launched a story arc about bullying , which Glee co @-@ creator Ryan Murphy had been building to for a season and a half . He explained that he wanted Kurt to reach a point where he would not accept the abusive treatment he received any more , and planned to follow the developments through the rest of the year , as all of the other characters were affected . The revelation that Karofsky 's antagonism stemmed from his own homosexual feelings was based on a personal acquaintance of Murphy 's . After the episode had been written , a spate of suicides occurred around the nation among teenage victims of bullying , which Murphy said added extra significance to " Never Been Kissed " and " ignite [d] the cast and the crew to do their best and push themselves with the story . "

The episode introduced Criss as Blaine , a gay member of a rival glee club , the Dalton Academy Warblers . In September 2010 , a casting call was released for an actor to portray a " cute , charismatic , gay high school junior " who would lead a competing glee club . Criss had auditioned for Glee several times before , once for the role of Finn Hudson . The character breakdown for Blaine was the first he believed he had a chance of securing , and indeed his audition was successful . Blaine was introduced primarily as a mentor to Kurt . Criss explained , " At this point , Kurt 's [sexuality] has been such a sense of discord in his life . Blaine finds [being gay] empowering . He embraces who he is , and sees Kurt [struggling with] the same things that he had to deal with , and I think he wants to impart that knowledge . " Murphy described Blaine as a character with " great self @-@ loathing " and regret for having run away from his own tormentors ; he intended this to form part of his story arc for the season , as Blaine tries to set right some past mistakes . Neither he nor Criss knew whether Blaine would eventually become Kurt 's boyfriend ? a role originally intended for new club member Sam Evans (Chord Overstreet) until the producers decided to change Sam to heterosexual and paired him with Quinn ? but based on the characters ' chemistry and the " immediate outcry " from fans who wanted to see them as a couple , Murphy later decided to pair them romantically .

Other recurring characters who appeared were glee club members Sam and Mike Chang (Harry Shum , Jr .) , Principal Figgins (Iqbal Theba) , jock bully Dave Karofsky , cheerleader Becky Jackson (Lauren Potter) , students Jacob Ben Israel (Josh Sussman) and Lauren Zizes (Ashley Fink) , and Coach Shannon Beiste . Although Beiste 's physical appearance was used as comedy in the episode , Jones was not offended ; she called it hysterical , said " it serves a purpose for the message " and hoped " maybe it will make people think outside of the show . " Murphy intended her storyline to highlight the fact that bullying can be damaging without necessarily being overt . He stated : " Th [e] episode is completely about accountability . If you can change any young impressionable minds and make them aware of the consequences of their actions and all different forms of cruelty , I think that ? s a great , great gift . " Telly Leung and Titus Makin , Jr. guest starred as Wes and David respectively , two additional members of the Dalton Academy Warblers . Hyatt guest starred as Joan Martin , Puck 's probation officer .

The episode featured cover versions of " Teenage Dream " by Katy Perry , " One Love / People Get Ready " by Bob Marley & the Wailers , and mash @-@ ups of The Rolling Stones ' " Start Me Up " with Bon Jovi 's " Livin ' on a Prayer " , and The Supremes ' " Stop ! In the Name of Love " with En Vogue 's " Free Your Mind " . All of the songs performed were released as singles , available for download , and " Teenage Dream " and " One Love / People Get Ready " are featured on the

soundtrack album *Glee : The Music , Volume 4* . " Teenage Dream " was later also included as the opening track on the seventh soundtrack album , *Glee : The Music Presents the Warblers* . The background vocals of " Teenage Dream " were provided by collegiate a cappella group the Beelzebubs from Tufts University .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

During its original broadcast , " Never Been Kissed " was watched by 10 @. @ 99 million American viewers and attained a 4 @. @ 6 / 13 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic . Its rating was a season low to that point ; however , *Glee* was the top @-@ rated show for the night of broadcast in all under @-@ 50 categories . It was the most @-@ viewed scripted show of the week amongst adults 18 ? 49 , and ranked twenty @-@ first amongst all viewers . In Australia , the episode was watched by 1 @. @ 081 million viewers , a decline from previous weeks , which was attributed by David Dale of *The Sydney Morning Herald* to many regular viewers being away on Schoolies week . In Canada , 1 @. @ 97 million viewers watched the episode , placing twelfth for the week . In the UK , the episode was watched by 2 @. @ 64 million viewers (2 @. @ 20 million on E4 , and 438 @, @ 000 on E4 + 1) , which made it the most @-@ watched show on cable for the week .

= = = Accolades = = =

Glee was nominated in the Outstanding Comedy Series category at the 63rd Primetime Emmy Awards : " Never Been Kissed " was one of six episodes submitted for consideration , paired with the season 's fourth episode , " Duets " . Jones received an Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series nomination for her work on *Glee* 's second season , and submitted her performance in the episode for final judging .

= = = Critical response = = =

" Never Been Kissed " received mixed reviews from critics , who were polarized by Kurt 's storyline . While CNN 's Lisa Respers France thought it was *Glee* 's best episode thus far and IGN 's Robert Canning rated it 9 out of 10 , which signifies an outstanding episode , Linda Holmes of National Public Radio dismissed it as " one of the most facile and emotionally inauthentic episodes the show has ever produced " , and Todd VanDerWerff of *The A.V. Club* deemed it a failure on " almost every level . " *The Huffington Post* 's Leah Anthony Libresco found it an " extraordinarily counterproductive " response to the string of teenage gay suicides in early 2010 . Bobby Hankinson of the *Houston Chronicle* and James Poniewozik of *Time* approved of the storyline in principle ? the former opined that *Glee* 's willingness to raise mainstream awareness of such issues was " incredibly courageous " , and the latter appreciated that it would span a multi @-@ episode arc ? but both were critical of its depiction in practice .

Many elements of the plot were highlighted as being problematic . Holmes felt that Karofsky 's swift transition from bullying to kissing Kurt was absurd and " emotionally unsound " . Libresco disapproved of Will for treating Kurt 's upset as the key problem , rather than the unchecked bullying which provoked it . She found Blaine 's advice to Kurt " misleading and dangerous " , especially the suggestion that targeted children should be held responsible for confronting their attackers and putting themselves at risk of further injury , rather than for protecting themselves . VanDerWerff and Poniewozik were critical of Dalton Academy : the former found its tolerance unrealistic and the latter was disappointed that *Glee* declined to depict a flawed high school tackling bullying in favor of creating " an almost otherworldly paradise " . Poniewozik also noted that the storyline was inherently flawed , as the show had previously treated bullying in a light @-@ hearted manner , but opined that its saving grace was the focus it placed on Colfer , " probably the strongest actor with the most

interesting character among the Glee kids " .

Further praise for Colfer 's performance came from Canning and Entertainment Weekly 's Tim Stack , who approved of the episode for its depiction of there being no simple solution to the bullying . Amy Reiter of the Los Angeles Times commented that it was testament to the writers and cast that Karofsky 's kiss startled the audience as much as it did Kurt , and commended the transitioning of Karofsky from a faceless jock into " a nuanced character with a back story and hidden motives of his own . " MTV 's Aly Semigran wrote that , should the episode inspire a single teenager to have courage in the face of discrimination , or re @-@ consider bullying , it would be an impressive accomplishment .

The Beiste storyline was met with criticism . Reiter questioned why Beiste was made to look to high school students to " gauge her own desirability " , an element she found " hazy and creepy " . Poniewozik criticized the depiction of Beiste as an object of pity , and felt that Will 's behavior was worse than the students ' when he acted with " amazing condescension " and kissed her . Both Poniewozik and Semigran disliked the way viewers were made complicit in Beiste 's humiliation by being invited to laugh at her expense , and Holmes criticized Glee for denying Beiste dignity , with the observation that such a plot would never have been given to Kurt . VanDerWerff commented negatively on the way Glee plays up Beiste 's " masculine nature " while simultaneously lecturing viewers against mocking her . He called the kiss " somehow both heartfelt and completely horrifying " . Canning praised Jones in her " best performance this season " , as well as Beiste 's " raw and real " confession to Will .

The Puck sub @-@ plot received generally positive reviews . Poniewozik called it the " best and most authentic of the night " , with praise for Salling 's performance , and Canning felt that it served well as a comical break from the episode 's other storylines . Brett Berk of Vanity Fair enjoyed the additional depth given to Puck , and he , Stack and New York 's Rebecca Milzoff commented positively on Puck 's budding friendship with Artie . VanDerWerff deemed it the episode 's " least objectionable " storyline , though wrote that the awkward inclusion of their duet , the abruptness of Artie 's feelings for Brittany , and the " forced nature " of the scene in which Puck confesses that he does not want to return to juvenile detention all " conspired to keep the storyline from lifting off . "

= = = Music and performances = = =

Reviews of the episode 's musical numbers were also mixed , with the mash @-@ ups less favorably received than the other performances . Canning felt that the songs intruded on the storytelling . Hankinson wrote that the mash @-@ ups were " shoehorned in [to an] already over @-@ stuffed hour " , and Emily Yahr of The Washington Post said they served " no real purpose " .

BuddyTV 's Jen Harper enjoyed the harmonies and simple arrangement of " One Love / People Get Ready " , and Anthony Benigno of the Daily News gave it an " A " , with praise for the vocals . Stack graded it " B- " . He called it a " nice performance " , but incongruous in context , a concern shared by Erica Futterman of Rolling Stone , who preferred Salling 's rendition of " Only the Good Die Young " in the episode " Grilled Cheesus " .

Perry expressed approval of the cover of her song , " Teenage Dream " , through the social networking website Twitter . Harper found the choreography uncomfortable viewing , and Hanh Nguyen of Zap2it agreed that the performers appeared to be " rockin ' out a bit too much to it " , but felt that the song worked " remarkably well " overall . Futterman deemed it the best song of the episode , and appreciated that it was more understated than numbers performed by rival glee club Vocal Adrenaline during the show 's first season . Stack went further and called the performance one of his favorites on Glee ; he enjoyed the choreography and arrangement and graded it " A + " . Benigno again gave the song an " A " ; he called it " flawless " and an improvement on Perry 's original . In December 2012 , TV Guide named the rendition one of Glee 's best performances .

The girls ' Bon Jovi ? Rolling Stones mash @-@ up was received favorably by Stack and Milzoff ? the former graded it " A " , the latter called it " brash and fun " , and both writers appreciated the black leather costumes . While Harper also liked the costumes and the energetic performance , she felt it " paled in comparison " to the last mash @-@ up the girls performed , in the season one

episode " Vitamin D " . Futterman commented that the costumes and choreography overwhelmed the vocals , to the point of being " a little too Miley and not enough Glee " . Benigno called the song a " cacophony " and gave it his lowest performance grade of the episode , a " D " . He suggested that Glee had been responsible for " reviving the mashup fad " , but hoped the girls ' performance would serve to end it again . The boys ' Supremes ? En Vogue mash @-@ up was graded " A " by Stack , who liked the combination of artists . Harper preferred the girls ' costumes but felt the boys gave the better performance , while Futterman found it overly @-@ sentimental in context , but also preferred it to the girls ' song . Benigno gave it a " C " , and commented , " Not quite the debacle the previous mash @-@ up was , but given how fantastic this episode was , the sendoff should 've been better . "

== Chart history ==

All four of the cover versions featured debuted on the Billboard Hot 100 , and appeared on other musical charts . On the Hot 100 , the show 's rendition of " Teenage Dream " debuted at number eight , and sold 55 @,@ 000 downloads on its first day and a total of 214 @,@ 000 copies in its first week , the best first @-@ day and first @-@ week sales numbers for any Glee Cast single . It was the first Glee single to top Billboard 's Digital Songs chart , and debuted at number ten on the Canadian Hot 100 . " Teenage Dream " was also the first single since the pilot 's " Don 't Stop Believin ' " to be certified gold in the US . The other three songs on the Hot 100 were " Start Me Up / Livin ' on a Prayer " at number thirty @-@ one , which also made number twenty @-@ two on the Canadian Hot 100 ; " Stop ! In the Name of Love / Free Your Mind " at number thirty @-@ eight , which also made number twenty @-@ eight on the Canadian Hot 100 ; and " One Love / People Get Ready " at number forty @-@ one , which also made number thirty @-@ two on the Canadian Hot 100 .