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Language Arts

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Equal Rights Are LGBT Rights

Jackson is a supportive town and many people I know feel safer about showing who they truly are here, than in other cities. My sister, who is transgender, tells me that she has never been discriminated against because of who she likes or how she dresses, but the fact that it happens to other people is awful!

Sometimes, people who have taken the courage to come out or embrace as an LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) person just to be discriminated, hurt or judged. I really want equality for other LGBT people, so they can have the support my sister and others in this town has been given. When we explore the history, causes, effects, and solutions of LGBT discrimination, then we can combat the silence by raising awareness of this problem and supporting the people we know who are LGBT and supporting *The Human Rights Campaign*.

Past Injustice

Discrimination against LGBT people is NOT a new thing. In the past as well as now, people have been murdered in an attempt to stop LGBT pride and the existence of it, and in court, a law was passed so the judge was legally allowed to discriminate people. CNN says that “In 1978 - Inspired by Harvey Milk to develop a symbol of pride and hope for the LGBT community, Gilbert Baker designs and stitches together the first rainbow flag. Then on November 27, 1978, Harvey Milk was murdered by Dan White, who was heard saying he hated gays and gay pride” (CNN 3). This is saying that when a man first created the gay pride symbol to bring hope to the LGBT community, he was murdered in an attempt to stop gay pride. LGBT discrimination is not a new thing, and also means that in an attempt to stop LGBT pride, a man was murdered. This matters because someone was murdered trying to stop the LGBT community’s hope and pride. This happened 39 years ago, when it wasn't all over the news and such a big problem as it is today, this past year or so when it is a bigger portion in the news, now it has gone farther than the murder of one man, and shootings at gay bars have been reported. CNN also says that “November 1995 - ‘The Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement’ act goes into effect as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. This law allows a judge to impose harsher sentences if there is evidence showing that a victim was selected because of the ‘actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or **sexual orientation** of any person.’”(CNN 2) This is saying that in 1995, it was legal for the judge to give harsher punishments based on victim’s color, race, national, origin, gender, disability (if they had one), and sexual orientation. This means, that the judge was allowed to

discriminate, and so they would receive a harsher punishment. This matters because even the government was discriminating against LGBT people. This shows that just because they are different in a small way, they would be treated unjustly.



Love, not Hate

Discrimination against LGBTs are not all for the same reason, sometimes people don't understand how others live their lives, and sometimes it's only for fun. Toni James from Quora states that "It's because they don't understand. They don't understand that not everyone lives their life the way they do. They don't understand that there's much more out there than what they know. They want everyone to be like "them, but that's not how it works. You can't force someone to be something they're not. And trust me, it's not a choice. I can't force myself to be something I'm not." Because they don't understand. They don't understand that not everyone lives their life the way they do. They don't understand that there'"(Quora 1). This is saying that people are discriminating LGBT people because they are apparently 'afraid of change' so they try, try to "force" people to change by discrimination in hopes that they will become 'straight' to stop the bullying. People are misunderstanding and think that it is impossible to force something that they

are not, and that everyone lives their lives a different way. We could solve this discrimination problem by explaining that everyone lives their lives a different way and cannot be forced to live it another way.

Karen Franklin from PBS reports about an interview that “For Brian, a primary motive in committing assaults was to "have fun." He and his friends launched their adventures with excited anticipation and high energy. They prepared like athletes before a game, stretching their limbs, rehearsing their moves, avoiding alcohol and drugs. Brian explained: “It wasn't because we had something against gays, but because we could get some money and have some fun. It was a rush. A serious rush. Massive rush.”(PBS 5) This is saying that sometimes it's not because they are LGBT, it's a way some people take out their anger and even get paid. This means that sometimes people just assault LGBT to have fun This matters because LGBT people are humans too, and



deserved to be treated better than being used to “have fun”.

Discrimination Can Last A Lifetime

The effects of LGBT discrimination are homeless. Abuse and suicide. Holly Cliff from BuzzFeed says that “40% of homeless youth identify as LGBT. 68% of those kids were kicked out of their families and homes because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and 54% reported being survivors of abuse from their families. These experiences leave these young people particularly vulnerable to mental and physical health issues, and lead to the unfair criminalization of queer and trans*

youth.”(Buzzfeed 1)This is saying that some LGBT youth are being kicked out of their homes

and being abused for their sexual orientation. This means that when parents/guardians find out their children are LGBT, they disown them and in some cases, are abused. This matters because after these kids take the courage to tell their parents they are LGBT, they only get thrown out and or abused for something they cannot control.

At the Huffington Post, they say “The Williams Institute report from 2014 showed the prevalence of suicide attempts among trans and gender non-conforming adults who responded to the National Transgender Discrimination Survey was 41 percent. Of Lesbian, gay and bisexual adults, 10 percent to 20 percent report attempting suicide” This is saying that discrimination against LGBTs can result to suicide. This means that people who are LGBT commit suicide in order to stop being teased, abused, etc. This matters because suicide is a bad thing and discrimination against LGBTs can lead to suicide.

How to Help

You can't help it. You have tried to stop it, but it won't work. You have accepted the fact you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. You tell your parents and they are disappointed in you and your friends abandon you. No one accepts you for who you are. You want to die because you're teased for something you can't control, you are a social outcast. This is how many LGBT youths feel after they “come out” to parents or friends. To stop the discrimination against LGBTs we should give emotional support to any LGBT people in your family, or any of your friends. Yes, you may think that just providing only a few people you know with support isn't going to change anything around the world, but. If everyone helps ANYONE they know, then the whole

LGBT community will be touched. If everyone would help give an LGBT person they know a little support, we could help stop LGBT discrimination.

The National Center for Transgender Equality (TNCTE) suggests that you should “Provide emotional support for the transgender and gender nonconforming people you know, especially when they are struggling because of rejection from family members and friends, or struggling because of discrimination out in the world “(TNCTE 2). This is saying that just supporting an LGBT person you know, will help them feel loved at least accepted in society. This means that helping a person can completely help boost their self-esteem and help prevent any of the previous effects of discrimination. this matters because we can reduce the amount of suicide, and countless other effects of discrimination. After researching LGBT discrimination, we can help stop discrimination to LGBT people by raising awareness and supporting the people we know and supporting The Human Rights Campaign.

For my guts factor, I made a big poster that says one of the many LGBT pride slogans “Love not Hate” and propped it up on a bookshelf in the library so when people walk in, they can see it clearly. The Humans Rights Campaign is raising awareness of the discrimination against LGBT people, discuss the effects, keep others up to date on the current situation and raise money to try to get equal rights for all people.

Photo Credits

Photo 1

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/53347cbfe4b005ac7b3746ca/53fcdeffe4b0dedf238b5707/55f9d3abe4b0649caea8bfa0/1449069854144/?format=1500w>

Photo 2

<http://ls.teton1.k12.wy.us/access?TWBF2DGT4DNE8CQZFB01PJ9CQETC78OE>

Photo 3

My Ipad

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