

# About PFLAG

Founded in 1973, PFLAG is the first and largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ++ people and their families. PFLAG's network of hundreds of chapters and more than 325,000 members and supporters works to create a caring, just, and affirming world for LGBTQ++ people and those who love them.

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## Who We Are

We are regular people, perhaps like you, that have struggled with the emotional, societal, and political issues surrounding subjects involving the LGBTQ+ community. The Tacoma PFLAG chapter began in 1981 as a small group of parents and friends meeting in a local church. Their commitment to justice for all led to affiliation with PFLAG National in 1996. PFLAG is a non profit organization not affiliated with any religious organization, although chapters frequently meet at churches

## Our Goal

We are the Tacoma PFLAG chapter, a volunteer organization, providing a caring safe space for support, to include sexuality Identity, gender identity, parents, friends, and those who love them.

- It may be your son, daughter, a friend who is struggling, or even parents with questions.
- We are your ears of support, express your feelings, and we can help answer your questions.
- We are here to improve and strengthen your relationships with family and friends.
- We want to exercise compassion for ourselves and others willing to take the journey toward love and acceptance.
- Our communications help dispel myths and share the truth about LGBTQ+.
- We can help you, please ask!

## Our Meetings

Meetings vary each month with programs that involve speakers, videos, our members, and discussions.

- We learn about LGBTQ+ people, their families, friends, and those who care about them.
- We share with each other in support, non-judgmentally, of those seeking information and learning more.
- Your love, feelings, emotions, and questions are all important to us and those who may be affected by the changes presented to you and your family.
- We are people just like you with similar and different situations that brought us to PFLAG.
- Privacy and security is not just a word in our meetings, it is an integral part of each meeting.
- Our door is open to you!

# What We Do

With lifetimes of misinformation about sexuality Identity and gender identity, many people do not know where to turn when they find out a family member or friend is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (LGBTQ+). PFLAG provides direct support to people who need answers to their questions and help with strengthening family relationships.

- What do I say?
- What do I do?
- I am confused?
- Am I the only one like this?
- Can you help me?
- Is there a mental problem?
- What is wrong with me?
- What is wrong with my parenting?

PFLAG is here for you and those who love them (LGBTQ+).

Support groups meet each month and offer a non-judgmental outlet for feelings and a place to meet other people in similar situations. Meetings offer opportunities to learn about LGBTQ+ people and their families – through speakers, videos, and discussions. Those who come for help often become those who help others.

PFLAG is making a safer world for LGBTQ+ and gender, non-conforming people and their family members by dispelling myths and by communicating the truth about LGBTQ+ families and friends. PFLAG reaches out to schools, faith communities, and other organizations to encourage leadership that fosters community acceptance of diversity. Our power comes through our diversity.

## Our approach

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ persons, their families and friends through:

*Support for parents and friends.* We understand the difficulties in learning that a loved one is homosexual, trans, or questioning. Our monthly meetings provide a supporting environment where you can share your thoughts, or just listen and hopefully learn from the experiences of others.

*Support for gay, lesbian, transgender, and questioning people.* PFLAG support group meetings provide a caring safe space where you can discuss your feelings and experiences, your sexual identity, seek the acceptance and unconditional love that our members have to offer, and to gain perspective on what parents and family members experience during the coming out process. Understanding gender identity and the appropriate pronouns.

*Education.* A variety of educational materials in the form of books, pamphlets, pdf files online, and video tapes are available for checkout from our library. Our monthly meetings provide an opportunity to exchange information on the issues facing LGBTQ+ people, family, and their friends.

*Advocating for justice.* PFLAG advocates on behalf of public policy to ensure equal rights, and to

provide full support of human and civil rights for sexual minorities. PFLAG reaches out to schools, faith communities, and other organizations to encourage leadership that fosters community acceptance of diversity.

## Our actions

We work toward the PFLAG objectives of Support, Education, and Advocacy in many ways. Our monthly meetings provide time for support for those in need, as well as educational programs.

### PARTICIPATION

We participate in many local LGBTQ+ related events, such as:

- Pride Parades,
- Out in the Park?,
- AIDS walks,
- Regional and National PFLAG conferences,
- and other events through out the year.

### FINANCIAL

Tacoma PFLAG provides financial support to local organizations including:

- the Pierce County Aids Foundation,
- the Rainbow Center,
- Oasis,
- Gay/Straight Alliances in local high schools,
- and other LGBTQ+ organizations.

### ADVOCATE

We encourage our members to become advocates after they become comfortable with their positions on LGBTQ+ issues. These can be efforts such as:

- putting a bumper sticker on your car.
- bringing up the subject of sexuality Identity, same-sex marriage, etc. with your friends or co-workers.
- getting diversity at the company you work for.
- writing letters to the editor of your local newspaper.
- making phone calls or writing to your legislators.
- volunteer to speak at local events or organizations to help others understand the issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community and their families/friends.
- stop bullying in the schools.

Collectively, these “small” efforts can have a huge impact.

We also have a lot of fun! Our board meetings are full of energy and interesting ideas. If you would like to help in our efforts, please inquire about becoming a member of our board.