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#BELONGTOYES

BELONG TO YES!

PARENTS & YOUNG PEOPLE
FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY



YOUNG PEOPLE FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY

About BeLonG To YES!

BeLonG To YES! is a parents and young people driven campaign which seeks to secure Marriage Equality in Ireland. We believe that the introduction of Marriage Equality will foster a fairer and more equal society – one where all families and young people can thrive. In particular we believe that the forthcoming referendum marks a key moment for the protection and promotion of young people's rights in Ireland. LGBT young people, and indeed all young people, continue to grow up in a society where homophobic bullying is a daily reality.

Research demonstrates that such bullying is based on a historical stigma towards gay people and that it can have devastating effects on young people – including poor mental health, depression and even suicidal behaviour.

This referendum is our opportunity as a people to tell LGBT young people that being gay is okay and that they are valued and cared for. They really need to hear this! They deserve to grow up in a country which cherishes all young people equally!

Why the Marriage Equality Referendum is such an important moment in Irish history:

1. The Marriage Equality Referendum is our chance to fundamentally change Ireland for the better and to make it a more just and fair society.
2. There has never been a vote like this before - a Yes vote will fundamentally change the lives of our LGBT friends and family.
3. A Yes vote will mean that never again will an LGBT young person grow up hearing that they don't deserve a loving and respected relationship.

“We want change;
we want to be a
positive part
of history.”

We talked to Irish young people about why Marriage Equality matters to them, this is what they told us:

Why Marriage Equality Matters to LGBT young people:

- “LGBT young people should be able to come out safely in schools and families. Marriage Equality will normalise LGBT identity for parents and teachers and will help make this happen.”
- “The absence of Marriage Equality tells LGBT young people their relationships and lives aren’t worthy of equal protection.”
- “I want to know that I am equal. At present I know that I am not and that’s really hurtful.”
- “I want to be valued and included in my society.”
- “I want homophobic bullying to stop. As long as we are unequal it will never stop.”

Why Marriage Equality Matters to young people who are not LGBT:

- “I believe in treating others the way that I want to be treated.”
- “I want to see my uncle marry his boyfriend. I love them both.”
- “Marriage is a lasting commitment between two adults who love each other, why wouldn’t you support it?”
- “I wouldn’t want anyone to tell me that I couldn’t marry the person I love, and I don’t want to do that to anyone else.”
- “Gay people marry for the same reasons straight people marry, they are not asking for any special rights.”
- “Years ago people of different faiths and races couldn’t get married, that’s changed now. This is the same. We need to be on the right side of history.”

What can you do to help secure Marriage Equality?

- Speak to your parents, grandparents and families about Marriage Equality and what it means to you.
- Speak to your friends about it and tell them what a Yes vote will mean.
- If you are over 18 – make sure you are registered to vote.
- Rally – become a campaigner for Marriage Equality. Visit www.belongto.org to see what BeLoNG To YES events and groups you can link into around the country

Tips for talking about Marriage Equality

If you are LGBT please only talk to friends and family members who you are already out to. Make sure you're comfortable to talk about this issue, think it through first and plan the conversation.

Talking to your parents and grandparents

Let's tell our stories! If you are LGBT, and out to your parents and grandparents, then this is an opportunity to talk about why this is personally so important. If you are not LGBT this is your chance to talk about your LGBT friends and the kind of fair and equal Ireland you want to live in.

Take your time with these conversations, be patient and listen. 1 to 1 conversation rather than group debate is always better – that way we are all more open and feel that we are being heard.

Talking to your friends

The same principles apply – it's really important that we are open and listening and it is best to have the conversation one to one.

Some talking points for these conversations:

- There are gay people in families and communities all across Ireland and the country is becoming a much more inclusive place. Irish people are fair and decent and this referendum should demonstrate this.
- Marriage Equality is about us recognising committed loving relationships – this is good for all of us.
- Gay young people deserve a fair shot at life! They deserve to grow up in an Ireland where they are not bullied because of who they are.
- Gay young people deserve to grow up knowing that they can aspire to be what they want to be and that Irish laws will not hold them back from fulfilling their dreams.
- Gay young people need to know that their families and communities value them, that they are respected and cared for equally.
- How would you feel if someone told you that you couldn't marry the person you love?
- Marriage is about taking care of the person you love, that's what gay young people should be allowed to aspire to.

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In particular we believe that the forthcoming referendum marks a key moment for the protection and promotion of young people's rights in Ireland. LGBT young people, and indeed all young people, continue to grow up in a society where homophobic bullying is a daily reality. Research demonstrates that such bullying is based on a historical stigma towards gay people and that it can have devastating effects on young people - including poor mental health, depression and even suicidal behaviour.

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- 2.** There has never been a vote like this before - a Yes vote will fundamentally change the lives of our LGBT friends and family.
- 3.** A Yes vote will mean that never again will an LGBT young person grow up hearing that they don't deserve a loving and respected relationship.

Why Marriage Equality Matters to Young People

We spoke with young people about why this referendum matters to them. This is what they told us:

- “I want to know that I am equal. At present I know that I am not and that’s really hurtful.”
- “I want to be valued and included in my society.”
- “I want homophobic bullying to stop. As long as we are unequal it will never stop.”
- “LGBT young people should be able to come out safely in schools and families. Marriage Equality will normalise LGBT identity for parents and teachers and will help make this happen.”
- “Equality is good for everyone.”
- “I believe it’s a simple issue of fairness and equality – everyone should be treated fairly and equally.”
- “Marriage is a lasting commitment between two adults who love each other, why wouldn’t you support it?”
- “Years ago people of different faiths and races couldn’t get married, that’s changed now. This is the same. We need to be on the right side of history.”

Why Marriage Equality matters to Parents:

We spoke with parents about why this referendum matters to them. This is what they told us:

- “I want to see both of my sons marry the person they love (one is gay and one is straight).”
- “All my children deserve to grow up in a country which cherishes all young people equally!”
- “Our children should aspire to be able to grow up being themselves and their relationships should be valued and protected by law.”
- “I want my children to dream about their future and know that it could be a possibility.”

What can you do to help secure Marriage Equality?

- Parents have a vital role to play!
- Speak to your friends and families about Marriage Equality and what it means to you.
- Make sure you are registered to vote.
- Rally – become a campaigner for Marriage Equality.

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back we want
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Tips for talking about Marriage Equality:

Let's tell our stories!

It may be the case that your friends and family haven't thought about this as much as you have so it will be important to be patient and to take your time with these conversations. Some of what you take for granted they may not and so it is important that you listen to them and let them air any concerns they might have.

One to one conversation rather than group debate is always better when talking about Marriage Equality – that way we are all more open and feel that we are being heard.

Some talking points for these conversations:

- There are gay people in families and communities all across Ireland and the country is becoming a much more inclusive place. Irish people are fair and decent and this referendum should demonstrate this.
- Marriage Equality is about us recognising committed loving relationships – this is good for all of us.
- As a parent I want my child and all children to grow up in a safe and equal society.
- Gay young people deserve a fair shot at life! They deserve to grow up in an Ireland where they are not bullied because of who they are.
- Gay young people deserve to grow up knowing that they can aspire to be what they want to be and that Irish laws will not hold them back from fulfilling their dreams.
- Gay young people need to know that their families and communities value them, that they are respected and cared for equally.
- How would you feel if someone told you that you couldn't marry the person you love?
- Marriage is about taking care of the person you love, that's what gay young people should be allowed to aspire to.
- Marriage Equality is about safeguarding our children and our families.

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