
LGBTQ+ Acceptance In The Irish Community

“All young people, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, deserve a safe and supportive environment in which to achieve their full potential.” This quote was said by Harvey Milk, the first openly gay state official in the history of California. Harvey Milk made history, overcoming the many obstacles faced by an openly LGBTQ+ person in sixties America. He, and many others, dreamt of a world where all humans were equal, a world where the LGBTQ+ community would be free to express themselves, free to be themselves, without prejudice or hatred. In that world, the LGBTQ+ community would finally be free to live as they wanted to. In that world, people wouldn't care about race, sexual orientation, gender, the only thing that would matter was the content of their minds, the life in their souls. In that world, they would be equal.

The world they dreamt of wasn't even the ideal – it was just a world where people had decency, a world where they could show a little compassion, a little empathy. How hard is that to achieve? Why haven't we achieved it? We need to build a world where children can be open, a world with far less bullying. LGBTQ+ youth are four times more likely to attempt suicide than others in their age group. 90% of lesbian, bisexual, and gay students have experienced harassment and bullying from their peers. Over half of transgender students have attempted suicide, with approximately 75% saying they feel unsafe in school.

We have come far in regards to LGBTQ+ awareness and rights, but acceptance issues still prevail. Imagine if our children had to go to school everyday in this harsh environment, if they came home from school everyday crying from the bullying, and for it not to stop there. For them to be tortured by the cruel words, the hard pushes, just for them to come home and see the cyberbullying start, watch as the text messages roll in. Perhaps, they even come home to be taunted and tormented by their unaccepting parents. Constantly having to listen to them saying that their identity isn't valid, that they, as a person, are worthless. Why are we so afraid of equality? Afraid of people feeling safe? What's so terrible about people feeling secure with themselves, assured that they are worth something? There is no reason to fear change, to fear people based off who they love, how they love. We may have come a long way, but there is still far to go.

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