

EMBRACING EQUALITY STATEMENT

Diversity is a fact. Equity is a choice. Inclusion is an action. Belonging is an outcome. - Arthur Chan

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY - TRANSGENDER AWARENESS WEEK 2021

This Transgender Awareness Week, the Embracing Equality group stands in solidarity with the Victorian trans and gender diverse community. As allies, we celebrate trans and gender diverse people, including Sistagirls and Brotherboys, and support the right for all gender identities to be recognised, respected, and celebrated.

Our vision is for safe and strong LGBTIQ+ communities where every person has full and equal access to social connection, schooling, employment, healthcare, and housing. We see a world where transphobia, discrimination based on gender identity, and inequality are called out, challenged, and become a thing of the past.

Sadly this is currently not the case, especially for LGBTIQ+ young people. Recent research by La Trobe University, *Writing Themselves In 4*, found a large proportion of the trans and gender diverse young people were experiencing high levels of psychological distress, suicidal ideation, self-harm, and verbal harassment related to their sexuality or gender identity.

That's why we are calling for increased funding to LGBTIQ+ community-controlled health organisations to support Victorian trans and gender diverse-specific health care to ensure services are culturally appropriate, accessible, and inclusive. As well as a systems and culture change so that trans and gender diverse young people can affirm their identity, especially in health and educational settings. The Embracing Equality group also calls for Parliamentarians to support the EQUAL OPPORTUNITY (RELIGIOUS EXCEPTIONS) AMENDMENT BILL 2021, to protect the employment rights of trans and gender diverse and all LGBTIQ+ people.

