

Dignity for all

Let me tell you a story. When I was in sixth grade, we were discussing the transgender swimmer Lia Thomas. When we were discussing it, multiple people shared that they didn't want transgender people to actually be in the same division as the gender they believed they were. Then it was like everything broke loose. People started yelling at each other, and I just sat my head down and cried. It took a few minutes to get the class back together. When it did come back together, I was just thinking, what has this world come to, acting like this to transgender people?

As you can probably guess, my teacher wondered what was wrong and asked me to go out into the hallway. I told her that I felt very strongly that what they were saying was wrong and that transgender people should be included along with everyone else.

I think that the Community Relations Commission's principle, "Honor the dignity of each person and each person's rights, would have helped our class discuss this issue. We should also teach this also at an earlier age so then everyone will know about transgender people.

Our class discussion made me very angry because the dignity of every person is very important to me. At my middle school, some people are not very kind to gay people. They're always making jokes about them, and they say that they just don't like them. It just makes me so angry, and I wish I could do something about it. I want to act, but what could a seventh-grader like me do to make a difference in all of those things? Sometimes I think that I can't really make a difference in those things because no one will listen to me. Why should anyone listen to me?

I'll tell you why. It is because I care about people's dignity and rights, and so do a lot of other people, too. We should include those who are a part of the LGBTQIA+ community even if they are different than everyone else. People look at other people who are gay and they think, wow that's not supposed to happen. But who are we to say that being gay isn't supposed to happen or that being transgender isn't supposed to happen? Only God knows that it is or isn't supposed to happen.

The people at my middle school have to learn to live with gay people or everyone else. We as a whole community have to learn to be kind to everyone and not discriminate against them for any reason. We as a community cannot keep doing this, and we can make a statement to other communities. The Community Relations Commission's principle recognizes the worth of everyone and includes *everyone*. If we could honor this principle as a class, it could spread to the entire school, and then it could affect the entire community.