

# *Diversity, Equality & Inclusion*

## **DEI Committee Friday Thoughts**

*Published Every Other Friday*



### **What is Pride Month?**

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Every June, we see a resurgence of rainbow flags, Pride merchandise and festivities across the United States. Festivals, parades and concerts are held in every major city. There is a sense of joy and freedom in the air. But there's so much more to Pride Month.

Pride celebrations are important for many, many reasons. Pride is a time to come together and celebrate our differences. Pride is the celebration of LGBT+ culture. It's about rejoicing that we can live our lives free of persecution--- to live and love the way that we were born to. However, Pride is not all rainbows and glitter at its core. Pride is the spirit of defiance. Pride is about continuing to defy unfair and unequal legislature and societal ideals. Pride is about fighting, not just during June, but every day of the year for equality for all, regardless of race, gender or sexuality.

Pride is celebrated in June to commemorate the Stonewall Riot of June 27, 1969. This riot has been called the 'Rosa Parks moment' in the fight for gay rights. The Stonewall Inn is a popular gay bar in New York City where bar-goers fought back against police who attempted to arrest several attendees for merely being homosexual. At the time, homosexuality was viewed as a "crime against nature" and punishable by law. One month after the riot, a march was held at the Stonewall Inn; the first time that gay people openly marched for LGBTQ rights and equality. This march was replicated annually and quickly spread to other cities, eventually becoming the month-long celebration and organized country-wide marching that we see today.

Unfortunately, despite more than 50 years of organized marching, protesting and advocacy, we still face inequality and a lack of LGBT+ acceptance in the U.S. As a gay child raised in Southern Virginia, I faced a lot of confusion and shame surrounding my sexuality. I came face to face with ignorance on a daily basis. I dream of living in a country where no children have to live with these feelings or experience hatred in their lives. To achieve this dream, we must provide education and resources to children and adults regarding sexual health and mental health, especially in rural areas where access to these things is generally limited.

*Please continue reading on the next page.*

With these thoughts in mind, I would like to highlight The Trevor Project. The Trevor Project is a nonprofit organization providing crisis intervention mental health counseling, suicide prevention services and more to LGBTQ teens and young adults. This is an excellent resource for LGBTQ youth, parents of LGBTQ youth and steadfast allies who want to have the information to help.

Here are resources for learning more:

- [The Library of Congress resource page regarding LGBTQ+ Pride month:](#)
- [The Trevor Project | For Young LGBTQ Lives](#)
- [Stonewall: A riot that changed millions of lives](#)

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**About the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Committee:** We are a group of staff and residents who together serve a mission to educate, embrace and empower a workplace of diversity, equality and inclusion. Our vision is to seek open and honest communication and collaboration that will inform and celebrate the cultural, ethnic and sexual orientation of all members of our staff without bias.

**Questions or comments?** Please contact us [dei@goodwinliving.org](mailto:dei@goodwinliving.org).