

Love is Love

Campaign Text

Sit quietly for a few minutes and picture the wedding of your favourite person — maybe it was your best friend, your sibling, a cousin, or your own wedding...

Think about the happiness that you all experienced that day. Think about the words that the couple spoke to each other as they exchanged vows. Think about the love, the laughter, the joy. Think about the profound effect that day had on their lives and yours.

Now imagine how that person would feel if they were told they weren't able to marry the love of their life. That it was actually against the law. Imagine how they would feel if they didn't have the legal rights that a husband or wife has. Imagine it. How would you feel if you were denied these human rights?

This is exactly what is happening all over this great country, Australia. People in same-sex relationships are being denied the chance to legally marry the most significant person in their lives. Their family and friends are being denied the opportunity to see them have a wedding day like everyone else, where their love is shared and accepted for what it simply is. Love. These people are being denied equality!

We are so far behind the times that even the United States of America has beaten us to the punch on this one. That's right, the people who voted Donald Trump into power, saw the injustice of not allowing same-sex couples to wed, and made it legal before we did. They have had legal same sex marriage since 27 June 2015. In fact, more than 23 countries have now legalised same sex marriage, not including the recent ruling in Taiwan, making them the first Asian country to legalise same-sex marriage. Australia became one of the first countries in the world to allow women to vote in 1902. This fight for marriage equality echoes the fight for the vote for women. So why aren't we so forward thinking when it comes to the rights of those in a same-sex relationship?

Does same-sex marriage affect you? What effect does it really have on your life as a heterosexual? So why should we oppose it? Why shouldn't we just accept it as a part of our future and allow these people the opportunity for equality, rather than feeling as though they're second class citizens? This feeling of being a second class citizen is a contributing factor to the highest rates of suicidality of any other population in Australia. According to a study conducted by Beyond Blue, same-sex attracted Australians have up to a 14 times higher rates of suicide attempts than their heterosexual counterparts. Surely acceptance of same-sex marriage would assist in showing acceptance in their way of life and help address the issues of ongoing mental ill-health.

Finally, on a personal note, why do I support marriage equality in Australia? I think about my young niece. I think to myself, what if she was to identify as LBGTQI in the future (even though at the moment she's got a huge crush on Taylor Lautner circa Cheaper By the Dozen 2). What rights would she have? Should she have? Why should she (or anyone else) be made to feel like they are excluded, like she doesn't matter, as though she were a second

class citizen? I fight for her rights (and those of my friend's children) for the future, the way others fought for the rights I have now. It's not just for the rights of the LGBTQI community, it's a civil right, it's a human right and one that we need to fight for.