

An Affirming Home for Every LGBTQ Kid

2023 Giving Tuesday

Mama Dragons is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating LGBTQ-affirming homes through offering LGBTQ parent education focused on mothering. Research shows that having at least one affirming parent in the home is the most significant way to decrease LGBTQ youth suicide, depression, and homelessness (Katz-Wise, 2016).

To create affirming homes Mama Dragons provides programs that address the complexities of navigating non-affirming religions, backgrounds, religions, and cultures, particularly during the crucial first year after their child comes out. Our mission involves empowering mothers to support, affirm, celebrate, and advocate for their LGBTQ kids influencing the family system to follow.

Mama Dragons has an extensive reach for our overall small operating budget. We can do this by limiting our physical assets, relying on our 180-person volunteer team, and focusing on scalable online programs. For every mother we provide services to build a more affirming home for an average of 2 LGBTQ kids.

We currently operate 7 programs that Mama Dragons members participate in.

1. **Online peer-led support groups**, which include our primary "main" support group, 21 regional support groups, and 7 intersectional subgroups that include 3 faith-based groups, 2 race-based groups, and 2 topic-focused subgroups. Our journey began in 2014 with a handful of mothers from the LDS faith community, and we have since grown to include offering services to over 10,000 Mama Dragons.
2. **LIFT Group Therapy**, is a new program that provides topic-focused bimonthly group therapy sessions facilitated by Flourish Therapy. In 2024 Mama Dragons will provide group therapy to an estimated 360 parents with LGBTQ kids in crisis, as parents are the gateway to ensure LGBTQ kids in crisis get the best external support.
3. **QPR Suicide Prevention**. LGBTQ youth are more than four times as likely to attempt suicide than their peers (The Trevor Project, 2022). Year to date Mama Dragons has trained over 500 parents in QPR gatekeeping.

4. **Parachute eLearning** is an online learning platform that allows parents and community members to learn about LGBTQ parenting from the privacy of their home. We have had over 1,000 enrollments in courses this year.
5. **Social Media and Podcast LGBTQ Education.** Mama Dragons has 35k social followers spreading LGBTQ awareness and our new podcast *In the Den with Mama Dragons* has 2,400 downloads in the last month.
6. **Paper Hugs** is a card-sending program where Mama Dragon members can send cards of encouragement to mothers and their kids when struggling or need a boost. Over 9,000 cards have been sent this year.
7. **Wrapped in Hugs** is a handmade blanket-sending program where Mama Dragons members can provide blankets to offer love and encouragement to mothers when they are struggling. Over 500 blankets have been sent this year.

Program Costs:

Mama Dragons will use the \$20,000 to support the operations, expansion, and marketing efforts to provide services for another 1,000 mothers directly impacting another 2,000 LGBTQ kids. This funding will provide support for all 7 of our services to new mothers for one year and be allocated as follows:

Marketing and Outreach (\$10,000): To promote our organization and reach mothers seeking support, we plan to invest in marketing strategies such as creating and printing supplies for Pride Events, updating our website, enhancing our social media presence, producing our monthly newsletter, and continuing our *In the Den* podcast.

Administrative Support (\$7,000): Our Executive Director, who is a member of the LGBTQ community and a Marriage and Family Therapist, oversees the volunteers of Mama Dragons programs. This funding will support her efforts to ensure the best possible service to each segmented community within our support groups.

Indirect Costs (\$3,000): This portion of the grant will be used for administrative expenses, including Directors and Officers (D&O) Insurance, legal

consultation, CRM costs, and maintaining our financial records through bookkeeping and QuickBooks.

Program Goals:

Community Expansion: Our primary goal is to expand the reach of our peer-led support groups to an additional 1,000 mothers and caregivers in need of LGBTQ education, particularly those within conservative faith communities and cultures.

Enhanced Education: We aim to provide comprehensive resources, education, and emotional support to empower parents to become advocates for their LGBTQ+ children.

Inclusivity: We aspire to create inclusive spaces where parents from diverse backgrounds, including various faiths, can honor their own faith journeys while supporting and affirming their LGBTQ+ kids.

Expected Outcomes:

Increased Membership: Within 6 months of receiving funds we anticipate a 5% growth in our support group membership, resulting in a more extensive support network for LGBTQ+ parents, and at one year, a 10% increase.

Improved LGBTQ+ Parenting: With enhanced education and resources, we expect parents to become more informed and capable advocates for their LGBTQ+ kids.

Faith and LGBTQ+ Affirmation: Our program aims to foster understanding and affirmation within religious communities, potentially reducing stigma and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ individuals.

Quantitative Data:

Membership Growth: We will measure our success by tracking the increased marketing efforts over the year.

Engagement Metrics: We will analyze participation rates, discussions, and feedback within our support groups, regional groups, and subgroups to assess the program's impact.

Survey Data: Regular surveys will be conducted to gauge the perceived effectiveness of our programs in empowering parents, improving relationships, and fostering faith and LGBTQ+ affirmation.

Safety Measures: We will track the number of successful verifications using Truthfinder Background Checker software, ensuring a safe online environment.