

# Mama Dragons: Building a Movement of Families, Education, and Hope

Mama Dragons began as a small group of mothers seeking support as they learned to love, affirm, and advocate for their LGBTQ+ children. Today, we serve more than 25,000 families across the United States and beyond, providing support, education, and empowerment to mothers and caregivers of LGBTQ+ children of any age.

While our mission remains rooted in supporting families, our vision has expanded. We are building a movement that strengthens families, changes communities, and creates a future where every LGBTQ+ child can grow up loved, supported, and affirmed.

## Strengthening Families

At the core of our work is the belief that families have the power to change lives.

Research consistently shows that supportive families dramatically improve outcomes for LGBTQ+ youth, reducing risks associated with suicide, depression, homelessness, and social isolation. Because of this, Mama Dragons focuses on helping parents build affirming relationships with their children through connection, education, and community.

Our private, vetted online network provides a safe space where parents can ask questions, learn from one another, and find support from people who understand their journey. Through our educational programming, suicide prevention training, and peer support opportunities, we help families move from fear and uncertainty to confidence, connection, and hope.

Programs such as QPR Suicide Prevention Training, our Empowered Parent Education Platform, and our Give Back initiatives - including Embracelets, Wrapped in Hugs, and Paper Hugs - provide practical tools while reinforcing the message that no family should have to navigate this journey alone.

## Expanding Beyond Our Membership

As Mama Dragons has grown, we have recognized that supporting families requires more than serving the parents who already find us.

Today, we are actively reaching into communities where support is limited, resources are scarce, and LGBTQ+ families often feel isolated. Through a growing network of hundreds of community partners - including healthcare providers, mental health professionals, schools,

LGBTQ+ organizations, and faith communities - we are helping connect families to trusted resources nationwide.

We also believe that education itself is a powerful form of advocacy. Lasting change rarely begins in legislative chambers - it begins when people understand one another. Through public education, storytelling, community conversations, media engagement, and accessible resources, Mama Dragons helps create greater understanding of LGBTQ+ lives, particularly transgender experiences. By increasing familiarity, reducing misinformation, and encouraging empathy, we help communities become safer and more welcoming for LGBTQ+ people and their families.

Our approach is rooted in the belief that hearts and minds change through relationships, stories, and courageous conversations. Every parent who learns how to support their child, every faith leader who gains a deeper understanding, every educator who becomes better equipped to serve students, and every community member who hears a new perspective becomes part of a larger cultural shift.

This is advocacy through education - not telling people what to think, but helping them understand the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people and the families who love them.

Through media campaigns, public events, educational content, community partnerships, and our award-winning *In the Den* podcast, we are helping people move beyond fear and misinformation toward familiarity, understanding, and connection.

Our podcast features nationally recognized advocates, physicians, therapists, researchers, faith leaders, and parents who share practical wisdom and lived experience. Recognized with multiple Signal Awards for excellence in social impact storytelling, the podcast has become an important tool for reaching families and communities far beyond our membership.

## **Building Capacity for Sustainable Growth**

Over the past several years, Mama Dragons has intentionally invested in the infrastructure necessary to support long-term growth and impact.

We have expanded our technology platforms, strengthened operational systems, improved communications and educational tools, and built organizational processes that allow us to serve more families efficiently and effectively. These investments help us work smarter, allowing a small staff and dedicated volunteer force to create national impact.

Much of our work is powered by volunteers. Mothers and caregivers contribute thousands of hours as moderators, educators, advocates, outreach ambassadors, event coordinators, content creators, and peer supporters. Many bring professional expertise in healthcare, education, mental health, communications, nonprofit leadership, and technology, dramatically increasing our capacity and reach.

We are equally committed to creating work that reflects the authenticity and creativity of our community. Unlike many organizations that rely heavily on stock imagery or borrowed visual content, Mama Dragons develops original artwork for our campaigns, educational materials, social media, and merchandise. This work is created by staff members and enhanced through partnership with a commissioned artist, ensuring that our visual storytelling is as unique, intentional, and mission-driven as the families we serve.

## **Building for the Future**

Mama Dragons is entering a new chapter.

We are expanding our educational platform to reach parents, caregivers, educators, healthcare professionals, faith leaders, and community members seeking trusted information and practical tools for supporting LGBTQ+ people. We are investing in outreach and awareness efforts that help families find support earlier. We are building partnerships that strengthen communities in places where resources are difficult to find.

At the same time, we are working to build a sustainable financial foundation that will allow this work to continue for years to come. As federal funding opportunities for LGBTQ+ family support continue to shrink and foundation funding becomes increasingly competitive, building a strong base of individual supporters and unrestricted funding has become essential. This flexibility allows us to follow our mission and respond to the needs of families rather than shaping our work around external priorities.

Ultimately, our vision is simple.

When one parent learns how to affirm their child, lives change. When one family chooses connection over rejection, communities become stronger. When thousands of families are equipped to have courageous conversations rooted in love and understanding, culture begins to change.

Mama Dragons is no longer simply a support network.

We are building a movement of families, education, and hope - one capable of reaching the next parent, strengthening the next community, and helping create a future where every LGBTQ+ child knows they belong.