



focus_contributor.


PFLAG
with **SAM DAWSON**
from Parents and Friends of
Lesbians and Gays



This month I am happy to share with you a beautiful and personal family experience story-to protect the young person there are no names attached but I know you will appreciate the angles shared here.

Our future daughter was born in 2013 when our first son was just over 2. A happy baby, then an outgoing toddler who loved to dance and make people laugh.

Clothing battles began at a young age, even before we realised he preferred girls clothing. His chosen outfits were always wonderfully outrageous. He loved a purple satin skirt from the dress-ups at daycare, so I made him a similar one and he wanted to wear it everywhere, but we weren't sure what to do at first. Our boy wants to wear girls clothes? Was this a phase? We let it be at home but forced 'boys' clothes to go out.. which didn't make him happy of course. It wasn't just clothing either, he preferred 'girls' toys and TV shows too.

These battles went on, with push-back from family members who didn't approve. My husband struggled more than me as time went on and we realised this wasn't a phase. He needed time to grieve for his son and come to terms with our new normal. We will

never forget one day when he wanted his face painted. We showed him the 'boys' face paint options with no success. We then showed him the girls options and he got a fabulous rainbow face paint, he was so happy!

He started preschool rocking his favourite butterfly t-shirt and tutu. When big school was getting closer, I said to my husband, soon he will realise he has a 'boys' name. Just before school started, he proudly announced his amazing new name and asked that we change pronouns. The name fluctuated for a bit then she settled on one. It then felt like she allowed her adults a brief grace before she started telling us off for using the wrong name or pronoun. Our super confident change maker started school as her true self and school has been a great experience so far.

LGBTQI+ people have better outcomes with a supportive family behind them. Our child didn't choose this difficult path, all humans

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are who they are. Back in the early days, some of our family members thought we were enabling our child's behaviour. No parent would consciously choose this challenge. Once our whole family embraced our young person for who they were, the troubles and fears didn't seem to matter much anymore. Our child is not in need of medical intervention

yet, but that may happen soon and we feel we are educated as much possible for what is to come. Our aim is to ensure we have a young person who is happy, healthy and confident. If she is all these things, then we are doing a great job as parents.