

## Nobody should go through what I did. Please help Stonewall today.

Dear Stonewall supporter,

For as long as I can remember I've been bullied for being different. People have always made comments about my hair and the way I dress, but it wasn't until secondary school that I realised I was gay.

Being gay at my school isn't cool, 'gay' is what you call something that's bad, unwanted or broken. And that's how I felt most of the time.

Every day I got called 'dyke' and 'lezza' by boys as well as girls. Boys mainly say it straight to your face but girls are more likely to whisper behind your back, which can hurt even more. Once in the playground I was surrounded and threatened by over 30 girls - and the teachers didn't do anything!

I was on my own most of the time, in lessons as well as during breaks. They wouldn't let me in the changing rooms for a whole year so I changed for PE in the loos. I was so sad all the time and I didn't feel like I had anyone to talk to.

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### I'd like to help Stonewall tackle homophobic bullying by making a donation

**1. Check your address details**

**2. Please accept my donation of**  £20  £30  £50  £100  Other £ \_\_\_\_\_

(Or use the form overleaf to become a Friend of Stonewall and help us fight homophobia all year round)

**3. I enclose a cheque payable to Stonewall**  **OR please debit my card**

**Card No:** ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... **Expiry Date:** ..... / .....

**Security code (3 digits on back/4 digits on front for Amex):** ..... / ..... / ..... / .....

**Switch only: Start Date** ..... / ..... **Issue No** ..... / .....

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** ..... / ..... / .....

**Tick here if you do not wish Stonewall to send you an acknowledgement letter**

  Please make every pound you give worth at least 25p more to Stonewall I'd like all donations I've made to Stonewall in the last 4 years and all donations I make in the future to be Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise. I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT & Council Tax do not qualify and that Stonewall will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

I started to skip school and pretended I was ill a lot of the time, which made my mum really worried. I was also cutting myself on the arms and legs but had to hide it from her by wearing long sleeves. My teachers started noticing that my attendance was getting worse and my grades were slipping. I had no idea know what to do.

Then one day I went into school to talk to my form tutor about my grades and I saw a postcard pinned to the noticeboard behind her head. It was bright red and said 'Some people are gay. Get over it!' It was the first time I'd ever seen anything like it. I asked her where it had come from and she told me about Stonewall. I think she'd probably already guessed because of all my questions about the postcard, but I ended up bursting into tears and telling her everything. I was so scared but she was really understanding and it was a huge relief! She made me promise to tell my mum and said we'd have to do something about the bullying.

Luckily for me my mum was actually ok when I told her I'm a lesbian - I think she might have already guessed too! So her and my teacher went to the head, who got Stonewall to come in and do an assembly with my whole year. They brought an amazing woman who's openly gay in the army. It was so great to hear from adults who've been through what I have but are now living really interesting lives. It really gave me hope for the future and made me start to think that maybe there are opportunities for me.

I know it's only the beginning and I'm still going to have to put up with the whispers behind my back but I just wanted to say thank you to Stonewall supporters. Knowing that Stonewall has thousands of people behind them, who are just like me, has really made a difference to my life. I just hope they get to work with all schools so nobody has to go through what I did.

Thank you so much for your help!

Shannon, 17



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## BECOME A FRIEND OF STONEWALL AND HELP US TACKLE HOMOPHOBIA ALL YEAR ROUND

Already a Friend? Help Stonewall by passing this on to someone who isn't



Enter your email address here to receive exciting news and events info from Stonewall

Instructions to pay by Direct Debit (originators ID number): **6 8 9 7 9 2**

Monthly donation of:  £10  £15  £20  Other £ \_\_\_\_\_

Account Holder Name & Address (if different from overleaf):

.....

Postcode: .....

Account Number: ..... Sort Code: ..... / ..... / .....

**Instructions to your Bank or Building Society:** Please pay Stonewall Equality Ltd Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Stonewall Equality Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank / Building Society.

Please return in the enclosed FREEPOST envelope, ONLINE at [www.stonewall.org.uk/regulargift](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/regulargift) or PHONE 020 7593 1876.



THIS GUARANTEE SHOULD BE DETACHED AND RETAINED BY THE PAYER

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
- If the amounts to be paid or the payment dates change, Stonewall will notify you at least ten working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.

- If an error is made by Stonewall or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to Stonewall.