

Stonewall

# ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

**This resource is produced by Stonewall, a UK-based charity that stands for the freedom, equity and potential of all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people.**

At Stonewall, we imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live our lives to the full.

Founded in London in 1989, we now work in each nation of the UK and have established partnerships across the globe. Over the last three decades, we have created transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK, helping win equal rights around marriage, having children and inclusive education.

Our campaigns drive positive change for our communities, and our sustained change and empowerment programmes ensure that LGBTQ+ people can thrive throughout our lives. We make sure that the world hears and learns from our communities, and our work is grounded in evidence and expertise.

To find out more about our work, visit us at [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

Registered Charity No 1101255 (England and Wales) and SC039681 (Scotland)

Stonewall is proud to provide information, support and guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusion; working towards a world where we're all free to be. This does not constitute legal advice, and is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter.

## Pembe's Story | Stonewall Young Futures

Pembe (she/her)

Some of the difficulties that I believe came my way whilst I was at school included not being diagnosed with my ADHD. So I think that was a big part of not understanding why I was behaving the way I was behaving.

I think also being a queer woman that wasn't aware that she was a queer woman at that time also brought it's challenges. I came into secondary school feeling really positive. However, I just started to realize that I was struggling, struggling with concentrating, and struggling with being able to learn in the way the school structure was at that time in that place. So by the time I was in year nine, I actually was permanently excluded from school. I definitely think that I found myself as I was getting older and I think in the early stages of school it was a little bit more difficult.

I was a lot more suppressed, a lot more angry. That's the beauty of it, is when you're young, you feel really judged and you feel like you really have to fit in a certain way. Whereas now - it's not like I go around waving the flag, but I'm proud of who I am.

And actually I don't deny who I am. I don't act a certain way to just feel like I fit in. I am who I am. Like I said previously, I have got ADHD and I think that one way that we can look at as a society how we can help people more is to better understand it. You can't hate on something you don't know. I do a lot of stuff kind of backstage in the creative sector, and it's very white, cis, male dominated, and that's something that you see all the time. And being a queer woman coming into that space, I think at first it was really hard to navigate. 5 to 7% of the audio industry is made up of women. Maybe 1 or 2% of that is women of color. That's why I put together a Petok Productions. You know, that's for women, trans and non-binary people that work behind the scenes, screens the lens.

And I've been able to go out there and challenge organisations and challenge people being that queer woman. If you are that queer young person out there that wants to come into the creative sector or wants to go into a sector, you will find people that will support you and create safe spaces for you.

I think that when you're a suppressed young person that doesn't know how to come out and be who you want to be. Sometimes you come across in ways that is very misunderstood. I think it's just that you're not heard.

You can't hate on something you don't know. So, love yourself.