# Camp Free2Be Provides Support for LGBTQ+ Youth Amidst Growing Anti-LGBTQ+ Sentiment



In 2019, Elizabeth Erion co-founded Camp Free2Be with another parent of a transgender teen in Arlington. The camp, aimed at providing a supportive space for transgender and non-binary youth, started as a weeklong event with eight campers. As of this year, Camp Free2Be will serve over 60 campers, continuing its mission amidst growing anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment.

The camp activities include STEM, arts and crafts, outdoor games, and theater, along with daily lessons on LGBTQ history. The program also incorporates junior counselors aged 15-18, who are themselves trans or non-binary, offering a stipend for participation.

In the UK, a study by the charity Just Like Us revealed significant challenges faced by LGBTQ+ parents. Over half reported negative comments about their families, and many expressed concerns over their children being bullied in schools. The research coincides with School Diversity Week, an event involving over 7,000 schools aimed at promoting LGBTQ+ inclusion through free educational resources.

The survey noted that LGBTQ+ parents often feel isolated and anxious about acceptance. Instances of their children being excluded from social activities or experiencing negative remarks at school were common. The study highlights the need for more inclusive environments in educational institutions to support both LGBTQ+ parents and their children.