



# the at a glance series :: marriage equality & our families

Family Pride is the national non-profit organization committed to securing family equality in our lifetime. Our work consists of strategically linked initiatives—broad in scope, but simple in vision—love, justice, family, equality. We make change. We share information. We build community. We are visible.

# 49

number of states that refuse to protect families by passing marriage equality legislation



## marriage equality, a definition ::

There is no such thing as “gay marriage.” We are not asking for some special kind of marriage. We are simply demanding access to the same sets of rights and responsibilities under the law available to heterosexual couples and their families.

We are not fighting for domestic partnerships or civil unions; they are not the same. We must demand what we really need—marriage equality.

## how marriage directly impacts our families ::

Access to marriage is critical to the health and safety of our families. In terms of automatic protections, there is no other legal institution as powerful as marriage in this country.

- custody
- Social Security survivor benefits
- child support obligations
- state and federal tax advantages
- recognition as legal parents in schools
- medical decisions
- immigration status
- passing on inheritance
- applying for passports
- visitation rights
- family medical leave

# 1,138

number of federal policies and protections conferred by marriage

# 0

number of ballot measures that have passed in favor of marriage equality

These crucial protections, plus over 1,000 more, are automatically afforded to married heterosexual parents, and are currently being denied to LGBTQ-headed families.

“RIGHTS WITHOUT THE WORD MARRIAGE SMACK OF A CONCEPT LONG REJECTED BY THE COURTS: SEPARATE BUT EQUAL.”

Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders

## marriage equality today ::

### > Mass marriage precedent, *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*

On **May 17, 2004** for the very first time anywhere in the United States, same-sex couples in Massachusetts could file for marriage licenses (NOTE: no access to federal benefits).

# 15

number of states  
that passed  
"Defense of  
Marriage Acts"

*"We will no longer have to try to explain to our eight-year-old daughter why we can't marry. And more importantly, we'll be able to provide Annie with the full protections under marriage that we now can't possibly provide no matter how many legal documents we draft and sign."*

Hillary & Julie Goodridge, plaintiffs

## marriage equality tomorrow ::

### > marriage equality & LGBTQ-headed families / inextricably linked

The marriage fight and the fight for family equality are one in the same; they are about *access, protection* and above all, *equal treatment under the law*.

# 19

number of states with  
constitutional bans  
against same-sex  
marriage

### > public opinion

According to the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, in 2004, 63% of Americans opposed same-sex marriage. By 2006, only 51% of Americans still oppose same-sex marriage, marking a sharp 12 point shift. Senior citizens, Republicans and moderate religious groups reported the most significant increase in support for marriage equality, but opposition remains strongest from white evangelical Protestants.

### > beyond marriage

We know that being married does not make you a family and we know that not being married does not mean that your family isn't real. However, in this culture, at this time, *marriage is the only currency of commitment the world really seems to understand*.

It doesn't matter if you want to get married or not. We must fight to ensure that all our families have the option.

**to learn more ::** [www.familypride.org](http://www.familypride.org)

**visit** the "take action" tab or our website

**explore** the "other orgs" section of our website under "about us" for additional marriage equality resources

**download** the Speaker's Toolkit to become active

# LOVE :: JUSTICE :: FAMILY :: EQUALITY

## Can you afford not to support family equality?

Help us secure equality for all loving families. An annual gift of \$35 is just 10¢/day. Major Donors begin receiving exclusive benefits for \$100/month.

Make the commitment to fight for family equality by going to [www.familypride.org/donate](http://www.familypride.org/donate) today!