



Family Pride becomes Family Equality Council

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The Family Pride Coalition announced Oct. 9 that the organization's name has changed to the Family Equality Council. Jennifer Chrisler, executive director of Family Equality, said that the change is an acknowledgment that while the organization's mission is primarily focused on advocating for LGBT-headed families, the issues facing those families are similar to those faced by other non-traditional families such as single-parent and blended families.

"We really thought the name Family Equality Council captured much better the fundamental goals of our organization, which is to ensure that all loving families are treated equally," said Chrisler.

She said Family Equality has spent the last 18 months planning the name change, working with the organization's board and discussing the name change with members and focus groups.

Chrisler said that Family Equality will remain an LGBT-focused organization, but she said the organization's advocacy already impacts more than just LGBT families. She said Family Equality will be working in Arkansas to try to defeat an initiative to restrict adoption and foster care to married couples and single people, a move that would threaten the parental rights not only of LGBT couples but also of unmarried heterosexual couples.

"Our focus is going to remain primarily about LGBT-headed families, but already the work that we have done has influenced the change in our vision about how we do our work," said Chrisler.

For years conservative Christian organizations have pointedly claimed the "pro-family" label and tried to paint the LGBT movement as anti-family. The name Family Equality Council is notably similar to one of the most powerful organizations leading that charge, the conservative Christian advocacy group Family Research Council. Asked whether the name change was designed as a challenge to Family Research Council's pro-family mantle, Chrisler said that the resemblance is unintentional. She said the primary goal of the name change was to reflect the organization's mission of equality for all loving families.

"If that holds up a mirror to the very divisive and hateful and inciteful rhetoric of the Family Research Council then I'm pleased and happy about that," said Chrisler.



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