

## I'm Coming Out

**Candace Dellacona:** This is the Sandwich Generation Survival Guide, caring for your children, your parents, and yourself. We're your host, Candace De Laona, and Jody Argentino.

**Jody Argentino:** Hi Candace. So excited to be here today. Yes, thank you,

**Candace Dellacona:** Jody. Episode three. We're on a

**Jody Argentino:** roll. We are, and we're, our audience is increasing daily, and I love it and.

**Jody Argentino:** Super excited to be doing this episode during Pride Month.

**Candace Dellacona:** Absolutely. I was going to say happy Pride, but I know that, you know, one of the conversations we had recently is Pride should be every month. But nonetheless, I'm glad that at least there is, uh, an opportunity here to, to educate ourselves or certainly me and our audience.

**Jody Argentino:** It's, um, we, I think I like, I like that, I like to see Pride month as the opportunity for visibility. Um, because otherwise I look at it, I'm like, oh yeah, happy pride. Well, okay, but I'm, I'm queer the whole year. Right? Not, not just this one month, not just in

**Candace Dellacona:** June.

**Jody Argentino:** Right. But I, maybe it's this time that we create this sort of bubble of like.

**Jody Argentino:** I'm gonna say protection, that it feels okay to come out or it feels more celebratory and that's great. I, I hope that we can engender that all year round. But the fact that we have kind of developed this little bubble where that of time, that that is, um, more celebrated is great.

**Candace Dellacona:** Absolutely. And you know, that sort of segues into what our episode is going to be, uh, this week, which is in honor of our pride month is I'm coming out and it takes a village.

**Candace Dellacona:** So we're gonna talk about how we support our loved ones, particularly our kids, when they decide to come out as L-G-B-T-Q um plus. So let's talk about, um. The best way to support our loved ones, Jody. And you know, just give me a second here, because to our audience, I want them to know that in addition to your being a highly skilled family law attorney in New York and New Jersey, you uh, have a master of science.

**Candace Dellacona:** And child and adolescent development psychology. And I think that that's such a beautiful, um, sort of mark for you to show your commitment to the health and the welfare of the child, particularly when you're practicing in family law. And, and so I do think this gives you a little bit of credibility to talk about things like how we support our children when they come out.

**Jody Argentino:** No, I appreciate that and I, I will tell you, I got my master's not because I needed to, right. I had already been practicing law for 15 or so years, but, um, because I wanted to, right? Because I was doing guardian ad litem work or attorney for the child work, and I was like, I wanna understand this more. Not like I need to, the court would still appoint me, but I, I wanted to understand it more.

**Jody Argentino:** And I ended up focusing a lot on trauma and, um, and neurobiological issues. But my final capstone was actually in gender affirmation, um, of L-G-B-T-Q. Children in custody situations and in custody situations. The not in custody situations is the same. Um, like in disputes or not in disputes. The concepts of supporting your child are the same, just it adds an extra element if you've got an additional dispute on top of, um, the need to, um, support your L-G-B-T-Q Lgbtqiiaa Plus child.

**Candace Dellacona:** Right. I mean, I think that that's right and you know, I think one of the things that we should probably start. By saying for this episode is that coming out in whatever form, in whatever manner, to whomever is brave. It takes courage, it takes energy, it takes thought. And so we just wanna remind our listeners, any parents out there just to be mindful of this as they kind of go through the motions of, of what.

**Candace Dellacona:** Maybe their family will, will now sort of go through and, and take us their path with hopefully a lot of good advice from you, Jody, on, on the best way to do so. So let's get started. Let's talk about the pivotal role, um, you know, that parents play in our children coming out.

**Jody Argentino:** I think that the first thing people need to understand is that if your child is telling you that they are.

**Jody Argentino:** Gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, trans, non-binary, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. It's because they trust you, right? Yeah. They're not going to tell you something if they don't trust you. Yeah. So it takes a lot for a child to be able to do that. And this is a child, it, you know, there's a misconception that a child has to be a teenager to come out.

**Jody Argentino:** Right. Or an adult to come out. Um, gender identity actually develops between one and a half and three years of age. Wow. And people are. Well, how, how do they even know? Because it's not something that you have to learn, right? It's something that's innate and, um, but sometimes kids don't actually express it because they don't, I'm gonna say, need to 'cause they don't feel the dysphoria.

**Jody Argentino:** Sure. Um, until their body starts to change, they become less androgynous. Right. Or they're being, um, you know, like, uh, they're being. Required to wear clothing that doesn't feel right to them. So that's why sometimes you'll see it, uh, appear at various stages because it depends on the, the environment that surrounds that child and what they're actually going through for the right timing for them.

**Jody Argentino:** Sense And sexual orientation, uh, develops around nine years of age. Okay. So when people say, oh, my child's 12, they don't know anything about their sexuality yet. I'm like, yeah, yeah, they do. Um, and. I mean, 12 is actually, I think when, when we were kids, maybe at 12, we were thinking about our first crush. But now at 12, uh, kids are far more, um, relationship savvy than, uh, perhaps we were at that age.

**Jody Argentino:** But, um, but, and they're aware of their feelings, right? Sure. So saying like they don't know what they, they don't know yet really ignores that they have. The these feelings inside and that's okay. Yeah. And it's okay. Just because you have a sexuality doesn't mean you're acting on it. Right. Those are two different, um, things.

**Jody Argentino:** We help our children understand the safety of sexual activity, which is completely different than your gender identity or your sexual orientation.

**Candace Dellacona:** Sure. And so I think what's interesting in what you just said in a, in a way that you summarized through, you know, a child, uh, voicing who they happen to be is the listening piece, right?

**Candace Dellacona:** And I think that is key, that by being available to your child, it already means that they trust you and your job is to listen to them.

**Jody Argentino:** Right. And I think that actually starts, and the modeling starts way before your kid might have that conversation with you because you know, your kids are growing up from, you know, the moment they're born, listening to the things you have to say, listening to the things that happen around you.

**Jody Argentino:** And so it's important to think ahead, right? Sure. You may have a three-year-old, but if you're saying something negative about any particular, um, community or any particular identity. Then that's gonna be in their back of their heads as they get older.

**Candace Dellacona:** Yeah. And maybe internalized. Right,

**Jody Argentino:** right, right. Which may also impact how soon they come out, whether they feel safe with you, et cetera.

**Jody Argentino:** Yeah. And that can have a huge impact on a parent-child relationship. Yeah. So, um, one of the things that's super important is, and it's, it's, I hate saying this, but statistics. I talk about statistics all the time. Um, and the Trevor Project is a phenomenal organization, um, that has, that produces a national survey on L-G-B-T-Q Mental Health on a regular basis.

**Jody Argentino:** And they, uh, just did one in the fall of 2022. Um, and the thing that I wanna start this whole conversation with is that, um. I'll use, uh, trans and non-binary kids for the purposes of this. Um, there are 53% of trans and non-binary kids have considered seriously considered death by suicide in the past 12 months.

**Candace Dellacona:** Devastating

**Jody Argentino:** with parental acceptance and support, that number drops to 6%.

**Candace Dellacona:** Wow. What an incredible statement that is.

**Jody Argentino:** It is mind blowing to me when people are like, well, I don't know. I, I don't know if I could support them. I don't understand this. I'm like, this is the difference between life and death, literally.

**Jody Argentino:** And so. I like, uh, like hashtag Trevor Project Love the Trevor Project. I actually, uh, wrote a, an article for the American Bar Association, um, for a publication that'll be coming out soon based on, um, one of the Trevor Projects, um, analyses in their survey, which was like the five things you can do to support your LGBTQ Plus kid, and I love it.

**Jody Argentino:** Yeah. 'cause it's like a capsule size. Sure. And that's like a, a, a perfect thing for people to be able to walk around with and like absorb. 'cause it's not rocket science. It's, um, unnecessarily politicized, but the concepts are super. Basic and attainable for parents or for people supporting a child?

**Candace Dellacona:** Well, you know, I think it's interesting that you say that it's basic because I'm sure that a lot of people who are going through it, it doesn't feel basic.

**Candace Dellacona:** It feels scary for many parents. You're in uncharted territory, um, you know. I would say that most parents think that they're doing the best that they can for their kids. And so I think it's important for our audience to know that this really is sort of about imparting the best information for you, not to make you feel judged.

**Candace Dellacona:** Um, but we're, we're trying to give you the best resources of information so that you can best support your child, because statistics like that, Jody, are. Devastating. Right? I mean, I don't think there's another word for it. Um, you know, having looked at the Trevor Project myself, which is such a beautiful and an incredible resource, I think one of the things, um, that I read was that only about a third of kids who identify as LGBTQI Plus felt that their home was affirming.

**Candace Dellacona:** Yeah. So one of the first steps, it seems to me that a parent can make. Is that support piece, just to make them feel safe. And then all of the these other tips that we're gonna give you that like as you put it, you can walk around with and listen. You're gonna practice these things, right? Right. No one's perfect

**Jody Argentino:** and nobody knows it innately.

**Jody Argentino:** Right. Even I had to learn these things. Absolutely. And if you grow up in a, um, in a space where that's not part of your, um, your life, that that's not part of your. Everyday thinking, then that's a problem because you have to learn it as an adult. Yeah. In order to support a problem, support your child, but not know it's, it's not a problem.

**Jody Argentino:** It's a challenge.

**Candace Dellacona:** Yeah, it's a challenge and I think that, you know, we all love our kids and it's certainly as a parent, a challenge that anyone who does love their child and wants them to feel loved and safe and secure, and they wanna feel affirmed. That these are things that you can do to make that happen.

**Candace Dellacona:** So let's get into it. You know, we already talked about listening, right? That's step number one. You know, the information you just gave us, that this information could come out a heck of a lot younger than maybe you think it would come, uh, from your child. Yeah. So you have to listen and think about what they're saying to you.

**Candace Dellacona:** And

**Jody Argentino:** one of the things that people off also conflate is gender identity versus sexual orientation. Okay. And they're different.

**Candace Dellacona:** Yes. The gender identity. So tell us about that. Is

**Jody Argentino:** who you are, your innate sense of self. Right. Okay. Your, um, sexual orientation is who you are attracted to. Or not attracted to if you're asexual, but, um, so it's, it di it's completely different from each other and not dependent upon each other.

**Jody Argentino:** Absolutely. So it's two different things. So maybe the parent, the parent of someone coming out as a lesbian or as pansexual may not, um, not be able to exactly relate to a parent of a child coming out as non-binary or trans. Because it's a different feeling, it's a different experience. Sure. So it's important not to, we do kind of group them all together, but we wanna make sure that we, that you know, to, to, well, I'm gonna skip right to like number five on my list, right?

**Jody Argentino:** Which is educate yourself about L-G-B-T-Q people and issues, because that's really important to understand because to support something, right, you really have to be able to understand it and be open to learning about it.

**Candace Dellacona:** Yeah. Well, let's, let's go back then to, to the beginning. So after, after we're, we're, you know, in a position where our child trusts us enough to share with us maybe what they're going through, whether it's the sexual orientation, their identification, whatever the case may be for your particular situation, what do you say as a parent?

**Candace Dellacona:** Do you? Mm-hmm. You know, say, thank you for sharing and thank you for trusting me. It, it, can it be that simple, Jody?

**Jody Argentino:** Yeah. I mean, I think that's great. That's a great way to approach it. And parents can have their own feelings, but that's not the moment. For that to be expressed. Got it. It's also not something, it's important for parents to remember.

**Jody Argentino:** It's not something they get to decide or they get to approve of, right. It's just something that is, yeah. Yeah. So it's not. Help me make this decision, mom. Right. It's, this is who I am. Right? Right, right. And so if a parent comes back at that and says, well, I need to think about that and we have to talk about this further 'cause I have to consider whether that's good for you.

**Jody Argentino:** Right. Which we might say in some other situation, um, that's, that's not where this conversation should be going, if it is a shock. Okay. Say, wow, okay. Wasn't expecting that. Um, I support you. I love you. I wanna learn more. Right, right. I wanna understand more. I love

you no matter what. Yeah, right. Yeah. So even if you are taking a joke, but my kid would have to come out to me as straight.

**Candace Dellacona:** Right. So, you know, as our listeners know, we both have very different families, um, from each other in some ways, in other ways quite similar. Um, but you know, I think you're right. I think, you know, having the experience in your own family, um, perhaps in your family would be less surprising than in other families, right?

**Candace Dellacona:** Not because you expect it, but because you've already lived it so it doesn't feel so. Maybe momentous in, in your family and others, maybe it could, I don't know. Yeah.

**Jody Argentino:** Um, no, I think that's true. I mean, it was, look, my own coming out, which didn't happen until I was in my mid thirties. Yeah. Um, was because I think it was delayed because I didn't know such an identity existed.

**Jody Argentino:** Makes sense. Right? So if a kid grows up in an environment where all identities and orientations are celebrated. It is much easier for them to, like you said, it might be easier in that family. So in my family, kids are gonna know that that is just, I'm gonna say, uh, part of daily rhetoric, right? It's part of things we talk about

**Candace Dellacona:** and it's okay.

**Candace Dellacona:** And it's okay and it's okay. Yeah.

**Jody Argentino:** And in other families that may be fine with the parents. They may be supportive, but it just may not have been part of the daily conversation.

**Candace Dellacona:** Absolutely. I mean, I think life in experience informs your opinion about things. So if the kids don't see a lot of examples of sort of differences in that way, there might be a presumption that there isn't support when in fact there is.

**Candace Dellacona:** So, I mean, I think that that's really hopeful that just because it's not something you're familiar with doesn't necessarily mean, um, that it's going to be this. You know, incredibly difficult struggle for your family because if you keep going back to step one, which is I love you and I want you to feel supported so you're not in this.

**Candace Dellacona:** Awful statistic where you're worrying about the life and death of your child. You know, let's figure out how to do this in the healthiest way, and we're creating a really good foundation. So, you know, I think what, what you've said really is, is you're talking about a dialogue, right? Which, right, I think is probably sort of tip number two in our discussion, right?

**Candace Dellacona:** Listening. And keeping it simple and just saying, thank you, and I'm here and I love you and I'm proud of you. And then go through and really commit to an ongoing dialogue. Right. So can you talk a little bit about that, Jody?

**Jody Argentino:** Um, I can. The thing is, is that I. It's really important for parents to have their own resources.

**Jody Argentino:** I get a ton of, um, inquiries from people that are like, okay, my kid came out as trans. My kid came out as pansexual. What do I do? How do I support them? And I love those inquiries. No, to have anything to do with my legal practice. Absolutely not. But I give people resources and different therapists that are, that are, um, you know, L-G-B-T-Q, um, informed so that they can have those resources.

**Jody Argentino:** But resources like pflag. Great resource for parents. Your child should not be your educator. Yeah, that is a really important piece here, right? So your open dialogue with your child is about how they feel, right? And and your support for them and what you can do to help support them, but is not to learn about the actual identity or the actual orientation or the L-G-B-T-Q community.

**Jody Argentino:** Your child should not be your. Professor. Right. Your child. Yeah. You need to be their support. Um, and well, let's talk about the

**Candace Dellacona:** dialogue, right? So, you know, particularly when you're talking about children who are finding themselves in general, I mean, their frontal cortexes of their brain are not developed to make good decisions.

**Candace Dellacona:** About, you know, driving a car too fast. So I think, you know, in, in having that open dialogue, we have to give them space to figure it out and find the words for themselves in, in being able to discuss it with you. So the dialogue issue. Jody, I wanna make sure without spending too much time, because I think it's pretty specific and unique to each person, um, each child.

**Candace Dellacona:** But can you just give us a little scoop about the best way to keep that open dialogue?

**Jody Argentino:** The first thing is to, uh, I think realize that kids really accept what you tell them, right? So if you have a, a little one who, um, you know, says. Um, who says, well, I don't understand. How is, um, how does Aunt Joan, um, have a girlfriend and not a boyfriend?

**Jody Argentino:** Right? And your answer is, oh, well you can, you know, you can have a girlfriend or a boyfriend or a friend, or you don't ha, it doesn't matter whether it's a boy or a girl or neither. You are just, that's just who your friend is, and that's okay. The kid will go, oh, all right. Right. Like, and it's, it's no big deal.

**Jody Argentino:** If you make it a big deal, they make it a big deal. It's like if your kid falls on the playground, right, and, and you're like, oh my God, are you okay? Then they're like, they get upset. But if you're like, oh, wipe it off, let's go. You're okay. Look how big you are, then they're fine. So if as parents, sometimes we make a big deal of something that's not actually a big deal that makes sense to, to, um, children.

**Jody Argentino:** Um, and if they're really little, let them have their own voice, right? So you have a little kid that comes to you and says, I'm not a girl, I'm a boy. Um, you are. And, and if you are



not, you know, in a family that, that experiences this every day, you're probably going to be shocked, right? And you're gonna be like, what?

**Jody Argentino:** What are you talking about? Um, and, but in that moment, it's okay to just say, okay, honey, let's talk about that more. Right? Yeah. What does that mean to you? Yeah. And, and so just try to understand your child and then if they say, you know, the next day they might say, well, I'm a boy today. You are like, okay.

**Jody Argentino:** Kind of go with it.

**Candace Dellacona:** Just keep, go with it and follow their lead. Just go with it, with it. Follow lead, keep it an open dialogue. Right, right. And that

**Jody Argentino:** Okay. Well that follow their lead is pretty much for any age. Yeah. Right. That

**Candace Dellacona:** makes sense. I mean, so, you know, the, the next issue that I think cannot be overstated enough is.

**Candace Dellacona:** Support because at the end of the day, unless you're Jodi Argentino, um, and you have your masters in, you know, adolescent psychology, child psychology, we're not experts. And even in preparing for this episode, Jodi, right, we both consulted a lot of really good resources and material, um, to make sure that we're offering our listeners the support, the expert support that.

**Candace Dellacona:** That may be needed. So, you know, what are your thoughts about the next best place to go? You have, you're listening, you're keeping it simple. You're affirming who they are, you're keeping the open dialogue. You're um, you know, sort of entering into this space. What's the next step? Where do you get the support?

**Jody Argentino:** Not. On Reddit, right? Like not randomly from, um, something you might Google because you don't know what the source of that is, right? Sure. And we don't want necessarily fake news. We want to actually go to the American Academy of Pediatrics to wpath, which is the world, um, like health organization, um, to, um, to your.

**Jody Argentino:** Pediatrics, an affirming pediatrician to the website for Trevor Project, to the website for Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's sexual or uh, orientation gender identity clinic, right? You wanna go to known quantities within those. Like, if you're a professional in this, you have like, I have a book of stuff, right?

**Jody Argentino:** Like I have articles, I have research there, uh, on everything. So Phone a friend, right? Yeah. Someone you know that is in the community, someone that you know, has a connection to the community. And you can get those resources. You can talk to pflag, you can talk to Glisten. Um, there's so much out there, but the problem is there's so much bad information too, right?

**Jody Argentino:** Yeah. So, um, and so one of the things I wanna just go a little bit less about getting information, right, and a little bit more about, um, not just talking to your child, but



talking about your child in, and that's talking respectfully about your child's L-G-B-T-Q identity, opening your home to your child's L-G-B-L-G-B-T-Q, friends and partners, right?

**Jody Argentino:** So it's not necessarily just getting the information and saying the word. It's about creating the affirming environment. Yeah. 'cause if you say, Hey, have all your friends over, and then your kid's friends leave and you're like, wow, that kid was really weird. Huh? You're, you're automatically making a judgment of in, of a friend group that reflects your own child.

**Jody Argentino:** So,

**Candace Dellacona:** yeah. And, and so now you know, you're sort of segueing into our next topic, which is how to be an ally. But if we could just go back for those of us who, who don't have the access to, to information and experts, I mean, do you think as someone with her master's and, and you know, all things being equal.

**Candace Dellacona:** Presuming that, you know, one has insurance and and access to to professionals, do you think it's a good idea to then seek out, um, the, you know, sort of consult of the pediatrician and talk to your pediatrician about perhaps having your child, um, see a therapist about coming out and, and to make sure that they feel supported?

**Candace Dellacona:** Is that one of the steps that you would recommend?

**Jody Argentino:** Um, absolutely if your child needs to have that discussion, right? Not every child is at a point where they have dysphoria or they have, um, pain about their identity. Sometimes they just wanna sit with it and know that you, you are okay with it, and know that you support it before having to analyze it.

**Jody Argentino:** Okay,

**Candace Dellacona:** so that's interesting. Yeah. So, but, so, but they don't necessarily have to be, quote unquote in pain or, you know, be in a, maybe in a personal crisis. Um, but sort of, I guess it goes back to the open dial dialogue and following their lead, where if you do, I guess with any other issue as a parent, if you see your child.

**Candace Dellacona:** Maybe having some troubles working their way through it. Um, whether it's just adolescents and, you know, interpersonal relationships with their friends on the playground, um, to something that, you know, is much more impactful in their, in their life. Gender identity, sexual preference, orientation, that sort of thing.

**Candace Dellacona:** Um, so a therapist doesn't necessarily have to be the first call, is that right?

**Jody Argentino:** That is correct. I'm gonna just, I'm gonna stick a pin in you for one second, Candace. 'cause I will tell you that. I would advocate to never use the term sexual preference.

**Candace Dellacona:** Oh, okay. Um,

**Jody Argentino:** because sexual preference means it's a choice.

**Jody Argentino:** Got it. And it is not a choice. Yes. And well, and this is a perfect example, right? We're having this conversation and this happens all the time. I talk to people and they say something, I'm like, Ooh, you know what they say, oh my transgendered child, right? And I'm like, okay, let's take that Ed off the end there because it is an adjective, it's not a noun.

**Jody Argentino:** Right? There's we, we need to make sure that we're using that language. Yeah. And that's actually perfect. Perfectly segues right into one of the other Trevor Projects. Five points, which is talk respectfully about L-G-B-T-Q identity. Sure. And you wanna make sure that you're using the language, but you're like, where do I find that language?

**Jody Argentino:** How do I get that language? Well, you listen to podcasts, right. But, um, but there's, there's a lot of really good resources out there, um, where you can find a list of what works and what doesn't work with regard to language and, um. Or asking, right? Yeah. The intent is actually more important than the words, right?

**Jody Argentino:** So I mean, I

**Candace Dellacona:** think that you're right. So, you know, one of the things we just talked about was, you know, making sure that you're using affirming language to make them feel loved and supported. And in so doing, you wanna make sure that you don't misstep with certain words that may. Cause someone harm or discomfort.

**Candace Dellacona:** Um, and, and it can turn into a teaching moment. Um, yeah. So just like you are teaching me, right? Right.

**Jody Argentino:** And it's better to have a teachable moment. Always better to have a teachable moment. So this goes with, uh, pronouns too, right? So chosen names and pronouns. The effect on children abusing their, their pronouns and chosen names is enormous when it comes to their mental health.

**Jody Argentino:** And that's. People will say, oh, well, I, I just can't remember that. But that's BS because you remembered it the first time. You can remember the change, right? You remember the name of everybody that you meet that in a class that you teach, you're gonna re, you know, it is really not that much harder to remember the pronoun of the child that you see all the time.

**Jody Argentino:** But if you mess up right, it's okay. So long as you acknowledge that you messed up sure. And that you're gonna do better. And that you're gonna try harder and that you don't just keep messing up and blowing it off, because that's the insult, right? Yeah.

**Candace Dellacona:** It's the problem. Well, it's important, right? And, and it's about loving and supporting the person.

**Candace Dellacona:** And you know, when you, when you say that you're sorry, um, they still feel loved and supported, even if you do use the wrong word in a way that I just did just now. Right. And I think, you know. Bringing up the pronoun issue and the support issue goes back into

allyship and, and how those of us who may not, um, you know, identify as L-G-B-T-Q-I-A, but love someone who is, and I would.

**Candace Dellacona:** Venture to guess that's most of our audience. How do we make sure that we are allies? I mean, one of the things that we talked about at the top of this episode is that your child is watching you. They're listening to you. They're watching what you do and what you say. So. You know, you made the point of inviting your child's friends over to your safe, supportive home is one of the simplest things, right, that you can do as a parent.

**Jody Argentino:** Create that safe space. Now, that doesn't mean that you have to invite them over and have all rainbow balloons and rainbow paper plates, and rainbow napkins, and like. Be walking around talking about every gay person you ever knew, right? Like it's not, it just means having a home where that's off the table where people just come in and their friends just get to hang out.

**Jody Argentino:** And if they're wearing nail polish, great. And if they're, um, and if they're, you know, wearing a dress, great. You're not gonna look at them sideways. You're not gonna make a comment about it. You're just gonna be welcoming in your home. Um, and, um, and the. The community, right? We, we talk about the systems.

**Jody Argentino:** When somebody comes out, it's, there's all of these different systems in their life and there's a family system, there's a peer system, school system, society, right? And so this kid has to navigate all of those different spaces. So if they at least have that one safe space that you have control over, right?

**Jody Argentino:** I don't have control over, uh, over what society is doing or what Alabama's up to, or. What nonsense Florida has come up with now, right? Like I, I don't have control over that, but I do have control over my own home and the people I expose my children to on a regular basis. And that's the important piece.

**Jody Argentino:** Uh, I'm gonna tell you this little anecdote as we're sort of wrapping up, but my, um, so I have a, well, I have twins and, um, they just turned 10 the day before yesterday. And, um, the. And my daughter made herself a superhero costume, um, out of, I don't know, a paper bag, some sticks, and, um, some paper. She made a mask.

**Jody Argentino:** She made like a quiver and a bow and arrow and some string. It was, it's amazing. And, and she's like. Mom, I am a superhero. I am going to be a superhero. I don't know what my superhero name is yet. Her brother has now named it, but I don't know what it is yet. But I know that what she does is she fights for the L-G-B-T-Q-I-A community and protects people, and I got chills and I was like.

**Jody Argentino:** That's awesome. That is beautiful. So she has since designed the entire costume. Yeah. Um, and she's like, I'm taking this, you know, this costume with me, all the, and it, you know, it's this little paper mask and Yeah. And she's adorable. But, um, and so, you know, I think we as parents, we can be that superhero for our kids, right?

**Jody Argentino:** Because we can make sure that the people surrounding them are supportive. Absolutely. And I was like, look at you. Go, you your little thing. Wanna be out there And like, uh,

and I could give you a list of names who my 10-year-old has decided she's gonna shoot arrows to, to change their opinions. Um, it's amazing.

**Jody Argentino:** Like a, like an L-G-B-T-Q, uh, woke Cupid. Um, my 10-year-old. I

**Candace Dellacona:** love

**Jody Argentino:** it. Um, but it's, it's really that energy, right? Yeah. And that like unconditional, like, okay, we're gonna provide an environment. I that I may not understand, but I am damn well going to make sure that you feel loved and want to be alive.

**Jody Argentino:** Absolutely. I mean, that is the very least what a, what bar that is.

**Candace Dellacona:** I know. And you know, I think though, Jody, what. What it comes down to is back to the basics of, of what this podcast is about. You know, how we care for the people that we love and we wanna care for them in the best way for them. And that means accepting who they are and allowing them to come as they are and loving them for that.

**Candace Dellacona:** And you know, I. One of the things that I hope that our listeners take away from this is there is such a large community of support and we're definitely going to be posting our resources. For you as a parent or a family member or someone who loves someone who. Might be coming out, whether in June or in December.

**Candace Dellacona:** Um, because you don't need, uh, you know, just one month for pride. I think, as you said,

**Jody Argentino:** like Christmas in July, we have,

**Candace Dellacona:** yeah, it should be, it should be all year round that, you know, we have to provide that love and that support so that our children feel the love and support and they're not part of a statistic that I don't even wanna repeat.

**Candace Dellacona:** Um. And I, and you know, as far as, you know, your daughter goes and, and what her aspirations are, that is really just a beautiful kind of moment and it gives me hope, right? Yeah. That this next generation sees things in a much more inclusive and loving way.

**Jody Argentino:** Yeah. I was, it was a proud, proud mommy moment, right?

**Jody Argentino:** Yeah, sure. And this is a kid that wants to be an entomologist. Like we're not talking about a kid who normally dresses up as superheroes and uh, and it's just. It's amazing to feel that energy. And I think that's what Pride gives us. That's what Pride Month gives us. It gives us that, that energy, um, that feels like we can do this, we can be our authentic selves and we can support those around us to be their authentic self.

**Jody Argentino:** And, and that's, you know, think I love that. I think that's the core of, uh, you know, of caring for everyone around you.

**Candace Dellacona:** Yes, absolutely. On that note, I think that, look, Jody, we are available obviously for any questions and we're happy to, to share with you all of our resources. Um, so thank you for tuning in for our third episode, and we'll see you soon.