

Pride 2023: Stop the Hate; Speak Up Against Discrimination

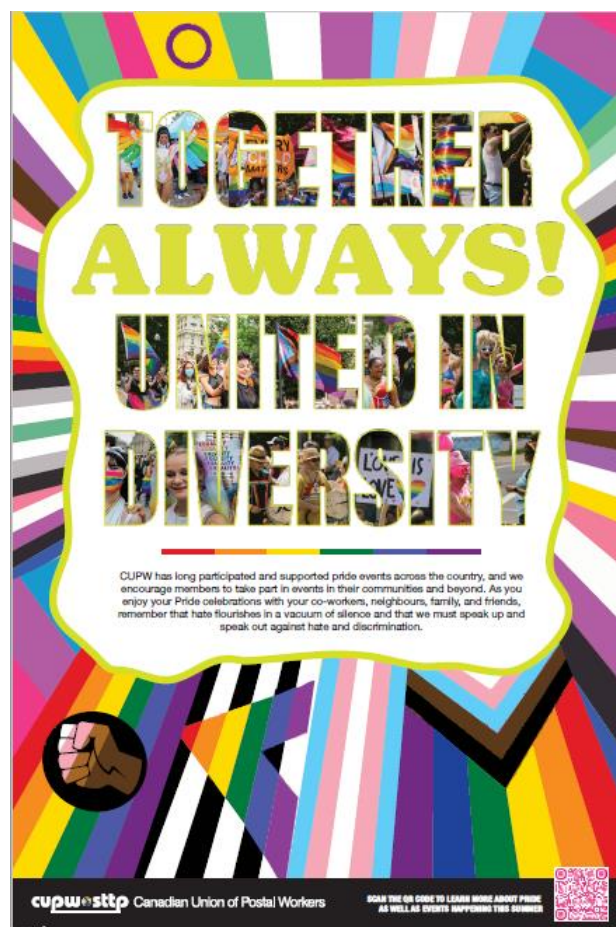
Pride Month is mostly known around the world and in Canada as a celebration. There are parades, parties, rainbows, and glitter. But Pride, and the modern movement to gain equal rights, started with the Stonewall riots in New York City in 1969, and despite some improvements in LGBTQ+ rights over the last 54 years, anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments have become increasingly toxic and prevalent around the world in the last few years – and the backlash and attacks are growing.

From the ban on drag shows and drag story hours in numerous US states, to the “Don’t Say Gay” Bill in Florida, to legislation targeting gender-affirming care, and the unprecedented attacks on the trans community, it’s a scary and dangerous time to be a member of this community.

Canada is not immune to the rise in anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment. Over the last few months, protesters have targeted drag shows and drag story hours, and some community organizers have had to cancel events because of the threat of violence. Angry parents have disturbed school board meetings to oppose the flying of the Pride Progress Flag. The Canadian Anti-Hate Network says multiple protests are happening across the country every week, and police-reported crimes targeting people based on their sexual orientation have increased by nearly 60 percent in the last three years.

Anti-LGBTQ rhetoric has seeped into Canadian politics as well. Most recently, the Alberta United Conservative Party which currently forms the provincial government passed a resolution to bar education on identity and sexuality, and to put parents in control of their children’s gender, which will greatly endanger transgender and non-binary youth.

A survey released last year by the Canadian Labour Congress found that 73 percent of gender-diverse respondents experienced multiple forms of harassment and violence at work. A 2020 study on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual earnings in the Canadian labour market also found these populations were more likely to earn lower incomes, experience more discrimination in the workplace and deal with increased barriers to finding and advancing in employment compared to their heterosexual counterparts.



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We must stand up and counter this hate. CUPW has long supported LGBTQ+ rights. We fought to end the degrading and disgusting practice of conversion therapy, we’ve developed resources and tool kits to help our members who are transitioning, and advocated for barrier-free, gender-neutral change rooms in new Canada Post facilities. Postal workers now have a direct line to uniform modifications, name change, and any other related needs like bathrooms.

But we need to do more to protect our most vulnerable. We must use our collective voices to stop the hate. Sign the petition to ask the federal government to support LGBTQ+ rights and act in the face of rising hate: <https://www.momentumcanada.net/act4queersafety>

Solidarity,



Coleen Jones
2nd National Vice-President

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If you’re suffering, there are numerous resources at your disposal. ItGetsBetter Canada has compiled a list of organizations and phone numbers across the country for anyone in crisis: <https://itgetsbettercanada.org/get-help/>

CUPW has long participated and supported pride events across the country, and we encourage members to take part in events in their communities and beyond (link to list of Pride events: <https://bit.ly/3IMTx7W>). As you enjoy your Pride celebrations with your co-workers, neighbours, family, and friends, remember that hate flourishes in a vacuum of silence and that we must speak up and speak out against hate and discrimination.



Scan the QR Code to learn more about PRIDE as well as events happening this summer.

