

[The Road to Pride: Supporting My Transgender Daughter](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/keshet/the-road-to-pride-supporting-my-transgender-daughter/)

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By [Britt Rubenstein](#) | Tagged: [parents](#), [personal profile](#), [Pride](#), [transgender](#), [youth](#)



My newly turned 12-year-old child walks into the room trembling and crying.

This is going to be huge. I wondered if I was going to be able to handle what my child was about to tell me.

To quote my child, "[Transitioning \[from male to female\]](#) is not a choice, it is a necessity." To quote myself, "**Support is not a choice, it is a necessity.**"

People tell me when they [watch my daughter on TV](#) or see me talk about her that they could never be like us. Please don't be fooled when you see us now. My husband Stuart, my oldest child Eli, and my soon-to-be daughter, had cried ourselves to sleep at night. We spent many hours in therapy and support group sessions. We got a little feisty with one another from the stress. The first seven months were the worst, and we hit a low point.

But now, here I am sharing with you where we are today and where you too can be no matter where your child, sibling, or loved one falls within the LGBTQ community.

We are three years into our new life. [We spent a year trying to get it right on how to handle the transition.](#) Lily's first day of transition started with layering on some bracelets, painting her nails, putting on her girl clothes, and packing up for Camp Aranu'tiq. She entered the safest space she could possibly begin her journey as a young woman.

When it was time to pick her up a week later, she had emerged beautiful, confident, and happy. She was wearing a smile we had not seen in a long time and thanked us for being a supportive family. We had made it through the storm and had a renewed child.

Again to quote Lily, "**When I was sad, I could only think about the present. Now that I am happy, I can start thinking about the future.**" We could not leave the last year, living in limbo, behind us fast enough so that we could start living again. It felt good to be moving forward as a new family with our son and our new daughter.

During the first year, we cancelled the [Bar Mitzvah](#) that was fast approaching. This was a huge loss for us, because we did not think we could get her to do a [Bat Mitzvah](#). She spent a great deal of time being angry with God. As happiness set in, confidence continued to grow, and support continued to flow from our Jewish community, Lily announced that it was time to start scheduling her Bat Mitzvah.

Two years after my child told us she was [transgender](#), she would chart new territory for our congregation. Lily led Shabbat services, read from our Holocaust Torah, and took her place as an adult woman in our Jewish community.

If you open your heart and your mind, like her brother Eli did, you can come to accept and love your loved one. My son had a hard time losing his brother. They were only two years apart and best friends. With time, he realized his sibling was still the same person. His love for his sister meant more to Lily than he knew. She had always looked up to him with admiration.

Lily has embraced and celebrated being transgender. She was offered a small acting role by HBO as a transgender teen, makes herself available for TV interviews, shared her story in THIS IS ME, and makes herself available to families that are struggling. She's involved in her school's [Gay-Straight Alliance](#), helping educate the staff and students at her school. This summer she will intern with an LGBTQ organization, [The San Diego Foundation for Human Dignity](#).

Be like Lily....[FULL OF PRIDE](#).

My husband and I gave our support, hearts, ears, and understanding to our child. Be like us.....[FULL OF PRIDE!!!!](#)