



# Hope Busselton Christian Church

2/4/2012

Nigel and Sandy Wittwer  
Hope Busselton Christian Church

Dear Sir/Madam

As pastors of 'Hope Busselton Christian Church,' community workers and parents of five children we would like to petition against the 'Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010.' We would like to put forward the notion that a marriage consisting of a male and female is the most stable environment for a child to grow up in.

We have been pastors of our Church for over nine years and of all our experiences in reaching out to our local community, the rate of broken families and the impact it has on people's welfare has been one of the most disturbing factors. We have witnessed first-hand the dire consequences it can have on a child's sense of identity when either a stable father or mother are absent from the family on a long-term basis. We have worked closely with youth, Aboriginal people, and people from all different social classes and still this concept has proven the same.

From our experiences, fathering or lack-there-of is a major element that strongly influences how a child will be in life. Statistics show that children that come from fatherless homes have a much greater risk of challenges in life including suicidal thoughts or tendencies, behavioural disorders, confusion of sexuality, struggling with identity, aggression, under achievement, and criminal activity.\*

According to (Cynthia Harper of the University of Pennsylvania and Sara S. McLanahan of Princeton University cited in "Father Absence and Youth Incarceration." Journal of Research on Adolescence 14 (September 2004): 369-397.)

"Young men who grow up in homes without fathers are twice as likely to end up in jail as those who come from traditional two-parent families...those boys whose fathers were absent from the household had double the odds of being incarcerated -- even when other factors such as race, income, parent education and urban residence were held constant." \*



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This shows that regardless of background, culture, or societal factors, a child's domestic upbringing is the most influential factor in whether they respond negatively or positively in life and as a responsible member of society. To destroy marriage laws as they stand would be to destroy the very foundation of stability in our society. Allowing homosexual couples to marry would most likely mean that more children would be raised without the crucial male and equally important female parent that should be the basis of any stable household. The result would be an increase in the amount of troubled citizens (esp. teenagers) which would also increase the amount of work and problems ministers and community workers like us would encounter.

Please consider our petition to keep marriage the way it is and acknowledge that redefining marriage as something other than 'the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life' could be extremely damaging in the long run to the welfare of our society and children.

Yours Faithfully

*Nigel and Sandy*

Nigel and Sandy Wittwer  
Pastors and founders of Hope Busselton Christian Church

\*Referencing:

Statistics retrieved from the internet

URL: [http://fatherhood.about.com/od/fathersrights/a/fatherless\\_children.htm](http://fatherhood.about.com/od/fathersrights/a/fatherless_children.htm)

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