



LADIES IN THE HOUSE  
PODCAST SERIES

**MOAD**

Museum of Australian Democracy  
at Old Parliament House



# LADIES IN THE HOUSE EPISODE 10: GEORGIE STONE & REBEKAH ROBERTSON

## Lesson Plan

### Learning Intention:

Understand the journey of Georgie Stone and Rebekah Robertson in advocating for rights of trans people and their role in changing the law.

### Success Criteria:

Reflect on the issues faced by trans gender teens and research a topic related to transgender issues.

## Before Listening:

### Activity

#### One:

Pre-Listening  
Vocabulary

Write up or project the  
following words on the board:

- assigned male
- gender affirming medicine
- arduous
- petition
- gender-diverse



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### Activity

#### One:

#### Pre-Listening Vocabulary

In groups ask the students if they can put the words into one of the 4 categories.

- Don't know it at all
- Have seen or heard, but don't know the meaning
- I think I know the meaning
- I know the meaning and can explain it

If any of the students are in the 3rd or 4th category, see if they can explain it to the people in your group or to the class.

Share the following definitions for the vocabulary.

#### Definitions:

- **Assigned male** - means that at birth, a child presents with male sex organs.
- **Gender affirming medicine** - medicine like puberty blockers and hormones.
- **Arduous** - difficult or tiring, requiring a lot of effort.
- **Petition** - a document signed by a lot of people which asks a government or other official group to do a particular thing.
- **Gender-diverse** - a term that is used to describe gender identities that demonstrate a diversity of expression beyond the male/female binary framework.



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### Activity

#### Two:

Before listening  
discussion  
questions

1. Have students brainstorm what they already know about trans rights and the experiences of trans children and their families.
2. Ask students to think of a situation where they would have to advocate for someone and ask them how they would do it.

### After Listening:

### Activity

#### Three:

After listening  
reflection  
questions

1. How did Georgie's first school handle her presenting as a girl?
2. Why was the process of obtaining gender affirming medicine so difficult for Georgie?
3. What organization did Rebekah found to support families of gender diverse children?
4. What did Georgie and Rebekah do to change the law for transgender children and their families?
5. How did Georgie advocate for trans rights through acting?



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## Activity Four:

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete with your students.

- **Discussion:** Have students form small groups to discuss the issues raised in the podcast about the difficulties trans children and their families might face.
- **Debate:** Think about the situation of bathrooms at your school. How could schools be more inclusive of gender diverse students? Is it fair to force gender diverse students to use the disabled bathrooms, even though being gender divers is not a disability.
- **Advocacy Project:** Create an advocacy campaign or project to raise awareness and reduce the bullying of trans students at schools. This can include creating petitions, organizing events, creating an awareness video or writing an article in a parent newsletter.
- **Research:** Visit the <https://transcend.org.au/> website and click on the “resources’ tab. Choose one of the categories such as; allies, E-Safety, sport, Human Right etc. Write down 10 interesting facts or advice that is given in this category and share the information with a partner.



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## Episode Transcript:

Hi, this is Kelly Chase and you are listening to Season 4 of a Museum of Australian Democracy and History Detective Collaboration: Ladies in the House. In this 3-part series we are celebrating the lives of trailblazing women who have made significant change to Australian society. I am excited to talk about two incredible change-making women, Georgie Stone and Rebekah Robertson. Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which this podcast is being recorded today. I pay my respects to the elders and knowledge holders past, present and emerging.

When Georgie Stone was born her gender was assigned male, but as a toddler, she began expressing to her mum, Rebekah Robertson, that she was a girl. In her heart and soul, she knew she was a girl. By the time she was 8, she was presenting as a girl in public.

Because it was the early 2000s, there was limited community understanding about trans children and no guidebook for how parents could support their children. Georgie, began to present as a girl at school, but unfortunately the school she attended was not very understanding of her needs, especially when it came to Georgie going to the bathroom. They forced Georgie to use the boys' toilets while at school swimming lessons exposing her to vicious bullying from some of older boys at school. Additionally, they would not allow her to wear the female uniform. Luckily Georgie's mum, Rebekah Robertson, was supportive and they found a safer school for her to attend.

However, there was a danger lurking in the future and that was the issue of puberty. If Georgie were to go through puberty without medical intervention, she would be forced to grow into a body in which she knew she did not belong. Rebekah tracked down some medical experts and after much consultation, Georgie was advised to take puberty blockers. The only problem was that legally, the doctors and her parents were not allowed to make the decision for Georgie to take the gender affirming medicine that she needed. Instead, she had to go to a court of law and a judge - who was not a medical expert—would decide if she was allowed to access this medicine. This was a time consuming, expensive and emotionally draining process and took around five years for Georgie to get access to all of the medicine she needed to be her true self.



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During this time, Rebekah recognised that there was an immense gap in the area of support for parents and families of trans children who needed help navigating the complicated world of law courts and medical professionals. Rebekah founded the Transcend organisation in 2012 to help connect families of gender diverse children and to show parents how to access the help and resources they needed. But that is not all, Rebekah and Georgie were not content with having a judge grant just them permission to access the medical treatment that Georgie needed. They wanted to change the Australian law, so that parents and trans children no longer had to go through the arduous and expensive court system to receive treatment.

Georgie started a Change.org petition and gathered more than 15000 signatures to support her cause. She wrote, “Having to go to court is costly, time consuming and stressful for trans teens and their families. It is totally unnecessary as the court base their decisions entirely on the expert submissions of the child’s treating clinicians. No application has ever been refused.” Georgie and Rebekah presented this petition to some politicians in Canberra. Their campaign was a success, and in 2017, families no longer had to go through the gruelling court process to receive gender affirming medicine.

But Georgie and Rebekah’s achievements did not stop there. Georgie loves acting, and wanted to find a way to simultaneously do what she loved, and advocate for trans rights. When Georgie was in Year 12, she wrote a letter to the bosses at Australia’s longest running soap opera, Neighbours, and pitched an idea to have a trans character on the show. They loved it so much, that they emailed her back and invited her to audition. She got the part! She worked with the writers to ensure that both the storyline and the language used on the show was a true representation of her experience.

Her mother Rebekah, published an extraordinary book called About a Girl, which is a touching and personal memoir about her journey raising a transgender child and the emotional rollercoaster that the family endured during the drawn-out court cases. In 2020, both Georgie Stone and her mum Rebekah Robertson were awarded Order of Australia medals for their service to transgender and gender-diverse communities.



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These two incredible women saw the need for law reform, community support, and media representation and they paved the way for future generations of trans children to access the support that they need. What I would like you to think about today, is what actions, small or large can you take to make your community a more inclusive place?

This is Kelly Chase, on the case.

If you are a teacher and would like a free lesson plan for any of the Ladies in the House episodes, you can head to the Classroom Resources page on the Museum of Australian Democracy website to download the lesson plans. You'll find a link to the page in the show notes.

See you next time!