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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Straight Spouse Network Changes Name to OurPath

*OurPath, Inc. Helps Straight Partners of LGB+ and Partners of Trans People Heal & Move Forward*

CHICAGO, IL, September 7, 2021 – After 30 years of serving straight spouses with gay partners, the Straight Spouse Network has changed its name to OurPath, Inc.

When the Straight Spouse Network launched in 1991, their focus was on supporting the straight spouses of people who came out as gay, lesbian, or bi-sexual. With the changing and expanding landscape of Mixed Orientation Relationships that includes Partners of Trans People, and more people remaining in their Mixed Orientation Relationships, they have adopted the new name OurPath to reflect inclusivity. In 2020 alone, people from 26 countries and all 50 U.S. states have reached out to their organization for much needed support that they couldn't find anywhere else.

A 2019 study by the Yale School of Public Health found that globally, as many as 83 percent of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender hide their sexual orientation or gender identity. This is a direct result of anti-gay/anti-trans and heterosexist attitudes. OurPath acknowledges that Straight Partners and Partners of Trans People, and their children, are also severely impacted by these attitudes. OurPath helps people heal when they learn that their partner in a heterosexual relationship is LGBT+. Their lives are forever changed when a partner or parent is discovered in the closet or comes out. The mission of OurPath is to make that journey as healthy and healing as possible for the family. Their primary focus is to help the Straight Partner or Partner of a Trans Person find their own path forward to a new future.

The paths and circumstances of their clientele can be as unique as the individual relationships they are in. Some clients stay with their LGBT+ Partner in a Mixed Orientation Relationship, while others choose to separate or divorce. Some couples have children, while others do not. Some clients have been in the relationship for decades and others only a few years. But Mixed Orientation Relationships happen to people of every cultural, ethnical, racial, religious and ideological background. This experience cuts across every demographic category and geographic location.

OurPath supports people as they determine the best, healthiest path for their future, and that of their family. They offer a neutral space where people connect with others in similar situations to share stories and perspectives of how to manage unexpected relationship changes. OurPath shares personal stories, research and statistics to help those they support make decisions for their lives. They also help clients navigate the unexpected inundation of emotions that often comes with learning their relationship was not what they thought, and for a reason that is beyond their control.

## THE HISTORY OF OURPATH

OurPath was formed in 1986 as a task force under PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) with a mission to support straight spouses. In 1991 it became independent of PFLAG and adopted the name Straight Spouses Support Network. In 2001, it became a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and shortened its name to Straight Spouse Network. Founder Amity Buxton, Ph.D., has been pleased with the adaptability of the organization over the last thirty years. “An increasing number of people are reaching out to us who are in relationships with people who identify as trans, and also those from serious relationships who aren’t married. We want our organization’s name to help them feel included,” said Buxton. She added, “The similar shock of learning that we’re in a Mixed Orientation Relationship (MOR) is where we come together. OurPath describes the journey we are all on together, supporting one another.”

According to OurPath Executive Director Kelly Hollimon, “Our future includes reviving some of our original focuses, including cultivating more partnerships with other organizations and working together to help more people. We also continue to expand how we help others, like virtual support meetings and producing the OurVoices Podcast on an increasing number of topics.”

As OurPath expands and evolves, they continue to dive deeper into more education for their support volunteers and align their processes so no matter where their clients are located or who they support, they are assured that OurPath is here to help them find their individual and healthiest path forward.

## ABOUT OURPATH

*OurPath supports Straight Partners and Partners of Trans people. We focus on ways to help people cope and heal when their relationship changes due to their partner’s LGBT+ status. The paths of our clientele can be as unique as the individual relationships they’re in. We are a donation-based organization and do not charge our clients for our services. OurPath is run almost exclusively by volunteers who respond to clients from around the world and run dozens of local support groups in the U.S. OurPath is headquartered in the U.S. with affiliated support groups in Canada, Australia, India, and the UK. OurPath is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Visit [www.OurPath.org](http://www.OurPath.org) to learn more about our services.*