Hi I'm Indigo and today I will be talking on the topic "should gay marriage be legal?" I chose to talk to you about this topic because it is very close to my heart. My Aunty is a lesbian, she has a partner and a child yet she isn't treated with the same amount of respect from the Australian government who are not legalising gay marriage. To me she is just the same as any other Aunty, mother, wife, human being, yet she is treated unfairly because she is gay.

 I believe gay marriage should be legal. **62%** of Australian citizens **agree**. Are you a part of the 62% or are you one of the 38% who are still discriminating against people for being themselves.   **Why?**

Here are my arguments.

Firstly, banning gay marriage is depriving people of basic rights. Everyone deserves the right to marry who they love no matter their sexuality. Why is it that Australia discriminates people based on who they love?

Did you know that **30% of all suicides** are committed because gay/lesbian people are being bullied and feel as if they don't belong and **their rights don't matter**. How is that fair? We have many laws allowing people with different religions and beliefs to do as their religion dictates, so why is this different? In some way the Australian government is supporting this incredible suicide rate of **30%** by showing it's okay not to legalise gay marriage. The Australian government should put a stop to this awful discrimination now. We are all humans and we all deserve the same rights.

Secondly, I believe gay marriage should be legalised because of the **economic benefits** married couples receive. One of the biggest economic benefits of being married is that you can transfer an unlimited amount of assets to your spouse at any time **tax-free**, a financial benefit not granted to gay couples. You may also receive **health insurance benefits** by using the **cheaper** family rate. If you are not married you are unable to receive the family rate, even if you have a partner and children. By not allowing gay marriage the government is practically saying that a gay couple does not count as a family, which is completely ridiculous and I don't know why anyone would support it.

My final reason for legalising gay marriage is the legal rights over children. For a married couple **both parents have equal rights** and responsibilities over their child. This is not the case for gay couples. If the legal parent were to pass away the other parent wouldn't have the **automatic rights** to be the legal guardian of his/her child. Meaning the non-biological parent would have to seek legal guardianship through the courts to **adopt their own child**. If the legal guardians family didn't approve of the relationship they could attempt to deny the non-biological parent the legal guardianship over **their** child.

Legality is another problem for gay couples. If they were to split up and the legal guardian of the child were to move away and take the child with them, the **non-biological** parent **does not have** legal rights to stop this from happening. They would have to rely on the courts to make it fair, but the courts **do not** recognise their rights.
Over what, not being allowed to marry because they are gay. Is that right?

The biggest argument against legalising gay marriage is that it's not **natural**, a violation of the "**natural order**". But why is this, the natural order wasn't created by Mother Nature it was created by **humans**, so it **isn't** set in stone. It amazes me that Australians can be so archaic as to believe that gay marriage isn't natural. Natural marrying or love is however you feel comfortable, natural with your partner, boy or girl, hence the title "natural", so if a gay couple feel comfortable together then to me this means it's "natural".

I strongly believe gay marriage should be legalised because our current laws **deprive people of basic rights. Married couples receive economic benefits over non-married people, and the legal rights over children are different for married families**. It's never been okay to discriminate against people so why do we act like its okay now? Banning gay marriage is a form of discrimination and it is wrong.