

## Washington State Trans and non-binary communities find a home with the "Hugz & Cuddlez" community

Members of the Trans and non-binary communities of Washington rejoiced this month when Hugz & Cuddlez, a Redmond based community, welcomed them with open arms.

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Group cuddling event

Members of the Trans and non-binary communities of Washington State rejoiced this month in gratitude for

Hugz and Cuddlez a Redmond based community, which welcomed them with open arms. At an <u>event</u> that was held for Pride-Month on June 17th, dozens of members of these communities gathered for a special social event dedicated to them.



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"Even though Washington State is highly progressive and liberal, individuals who are trans and non-binary still find it challenging to find opportunities to socialize in a non-judgmental environment," said Hugz and Cuddlez founder and event host Erez Benari. "It is our honor and privilege to create events for this community, where they are loved and cherished."

Hugz and Cuddlez creates and hosts weekly cuddle events where people from across the region gather, socialize and connect in a warm, safe and nurturing environment. These

events are organized by volunteers and are free for all participants.

"When we identified the need within these communities, we started organizing monthly events dedicated to them, in addition to our regular events, which are open to all," said Benari.

Group <u>cuddling</u> as a social activity has hit a note with the LGBTQ and polyamory communities, which are characterized by open-minded and highly-social individuals. Even at the regular events, the majority of members are from the trans and non-binary communities, who have found these events to be inviting and safe.

"All our guests are required to go through a strict vetting process to ensure everyone's safety and to create an environment free of predators or ulterior motives," said Benari.

Hugz and Cuddlez was founded by Redmond resident Erez Benari a retired



Group cuddling event



Hugz & Cuddlez Logo

computer engineer. Benari has spent decades with some of the leading technology companies in the world, and today focuses on creating and hosting cuddle events in the region.

Originally from Haifa, Israel, Benari immigrated to the U.S in 2008 and later adopted the polyamory lifestyle when he discovered his true passion for cuddling. His cuddling events have made a big splash in the Puget Sound area, as well as his philanthropy and voluntarism with the LGBTQ community.

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