



PFLAG Brisbane

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

Newsletter April/May/June 2012

## Keeping Families Together

Hi Everyone,

We had a valuable and informative meeting last month with guests from Rainbow Families. You can read all about it on pages 2 and 3 and follow the links provided if you would like more information.

Our next meeting is being held on Saturday 30th June. It's a little later this time as we had to fit in with room availability at QAHC.

We're off to Shelley's this weekend to film the parents' DVD which will become one of the many resources we offer to parents and families. The idea is for us to offer a cross section of experiences of what it was like for us and our families, when our children came out.

As we put this together Barack Obama has historically made his statement of support for same sex marriage and ignited debate on the issue in the lead up to the U.S. elections. This is an issue that just won't go away and as more Australians agree with the right of same sex couples to wed legally hopefully our politicians will get the message some time soon.

Cheers Pip :-)

### Shelley (contd.)

#### Submissions and Surveys:

Many thanks, to everyone who wrote submissions and completed surveys. The Inquiry received a record number of submissions on the issue of marriage and the good thing was at least 60% were in favour. We just need the MP's to have the internal fortitude to vote favourably, instead of being scared of the extreme right.

**I still encourage everyone to keep making contact with their MP's letting them know you want equality for your son and/or daughter.**

#### Australian Institute of Management – Women of Inspiration Breakfast:

I received the honour of being asked to speak to 250 business women in May at a breakfast in Melbourne. The topic was "Where I started from and how I have managed my journey for the last 14 years in the LGBTI community".

#### DVD of parents' stories:

We are in the process of making a DVD of parents' stories that will be used as a resource and given to parents when they call seeking support and assistance.

#### Mothers Day Cards:

Each time I go to Canberra I take information to give to every Parliamentarian and this time because it was so close to Mothers Day we gave them a Mothers Day Card with the photo of several mothers who marched at Mardi Gras, with the message "we didn't want flowers this year we want equality for our gay sons and lesbian daughters".

I also sent similar cards to PFLAG groups around the country with stamps included to post to Ministers of Religion. Not surprisingly, there has been total silence from this group.

## From Shelley

### In Canberra:

I have been back in Canberra twice, walking the halls of Parliament talking with MP's, Senators and Ministers about the need for marriage equality since the last newsletter.

I have also spoken at both the House of Representatives and Senate Inquiries into Marriage Equality. It seems that those opposing equality have realised they have lost the religious argument and are now pushing the issue of polygamy. Their concern being, if same sex couples are allowed to have their relationships recognised, polygamy will be next. We will always have scaremongers!



# From Our Meeting



The guests at our last meeting were Katherine and Tammy from Rainbow Families Queensland.

Katherine provided a comprehensive overview of the organisation and the issues facing many rainbow families. By definition a rainbow family is one in which one or more of its members identifies as LGBTI. Rainbow Families Queensland acts as a contact point for people seeking support, information and services available for their families. It has a website (soon to be live) funded by QAHC (Queensland Association of Healthy Communities). QAHC currently has on its own website a comprehensive downloadable booklet of information about issues such as: legal rights, pregnancy and birthing options, parenting and family options/issues, parenting agreements, dealing with discrimination etc. It is available at [http://www.qahc.org.au/files/shared/Rainbow\\_Families\\_Booklet.pdf](http://www.qahc.org.au/files/shared/Rainbow_Families_Booklet.pdf)

Tammy Clinch shared her journey with husband Matt and their two daughters when Matt was diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder. She told of his transitioning into Bridget and the ongoing discrimination, misinformation and fear that became part of their lives.

In an attempt to shed some light on the discriminatory situation that exists for transsexual people in Australia through their own personal experience Tammy and Bridget opened up their lives to Channel 7's Sunday Night program. By doing so they became a very public face for what has been a long standing situation of unfair treatment and discrimination in Australia.

Read more about Tammy and Bridget on page 3.



Both women spoke of the need for rainbow families to be included more in the LGBTI community. As parents they are generally focussed on raising healthy families and do not fit necessarily into the nightclub, party scene, which can be socially isolating. Some useful contacts are below: please be aware that these contact details are subject to change. Contact QAHC if you need help.

*Rainbow Mothers Social Group—QLD*

Meets the first Saturday of the month at different venues.

Contact Donna on 0412 072 021 for more information.

*Maybe Baby – Brisbane*

A group for GLBTI future parents. Phone (only) 07 38564442.

*Gay Dads – Brisbane*

A group for GLBTI Dads

having issues with their sexuality and/or home life. Meets second Friday each month. For more information you can phone Barry on 0419 661 145.

*Rainbow Families Playgroup – Brisbane*

A play group and support group for GLBTI parents and their children.

To find out more you can email [rfplaygroup@hotmail.com](mailto:rfplaygroup@hotmail.com)

*Gold Coast Gay Parenting*

Meets every second Sunday of each month for a picnic from 10:00am.

For more information please email [goldcoastgayparents@hotmail.com](mailto:goldcoastgayparents@hotmail.com)

*Dads of Diversity – Sunshine Coast*

Support, networking, friendship, social activities. Regular get-togethers.

Call Tez on 0410 772 872.

**You can also check out Rainbow Families on Facebook.**

## Let the Future be Kinder and More Just than the Past!

# Just Like You - Tammy and Bridget's Story

*Tammy and Bridget Clinch are the proud parents of two young daughters. They're a pretty regular family in most ways. They share a love of fitness, coffee, a career in the Australian Army and love spending time with their girls, but their journey together has not been a common one. They courageously shared their story on Channel 7's Sunday Night program, which can be viewed on <http://au.tv.yahoo.com/sunday-night/video/-/watch/22880704/>*

*The following is taken from their website [www.justlikeyou.com.au](http://www.justlikeyou.com.au) and is reproduced in part here as an introduction to their struggle for equal rights and recognition for transgender people and their families.*

The girls continue...

The media was a carefully considered strategic tool that when we weighed up the risks, we decided that the benefits of being public outweighed the risks and actually gave us a degree of protection in itself. We thought that seeing as we were a small part of the larger problem of ignorance and mistreatment of trans people that we should do our best to promote awareness and change for the better where we could.

We feel that the some in the media have missed our key points and have focussed on sensationalism or inaccuracies. We first established this site as a way to get our simple messages out to people. Transsexualism is just a biological condition that is part of the range of human diversity. The lack of understanding around this basic fact leads to a lot of assumptions, fear and mistreatment of trans people.

Much of the mistreatment is specifically prohibited in state laws; however some of the mistreatment in the form of discrimination is in fact created

and supported by our federal government, their bureaucracies and our quarter of a century old federal anti-discrimination laws. We thought we could shed light on these issues as they have been allowed to go on far too long, and try and get some positive changes happening to remove the discriminatory treatment.

We also need help from our fellow Australian citizens.

In Australia, each state manages name changes and birth certificates through the Births, Deaths and Marriages department. One of the requirements of changing gender on your birth certificate is that you have had genital surgery. Another is that you not be married (which we are, happily!)

Not being married changes your rights, and there are several issues for us with not being married. For example we would need extra documentation to prove that we can both pick up our children from school, when as a married couple it is a given. To divorce in Australia you have to be separated (that is, not in a relationship and not living jointly in terms of finances etc), which you can technically do under the same

roof. In our case though, if we got divorced in order to amend Bridget's birth certificate whilst still carrying on a relationship we are effectively committing fraud. We need you to tell your elected representatives that it is not okay for there to be government sanctioned discrimination and mistreatment of any of our citizens and that you support people like us and families like ours. We have become a very public face for what has been a long standing situation of unfair treatment and discrimination in this country, because we decided to stand up and be counted. We are trying to reach out to people and promote understanding and acceptance, but we're otherwise just another regular Australian family trying to live happily together. **We really are just like you.**



## Let the Future be Kinder and More Just than the Past!



**Our next meeting is at 1.30 p.m.  
Saturday 30th June  
30 Helen St Teneriffe**

## **Even in New Zealand**

Marriage equality advocates say Australia is falling behind, after New Zealand's Conservative Prime Minister John Key announced he has no personal opposition to gay marriage. The statement comes in the wake of US President Barack Obama speaking out in favour of same sex marriage.

Key also said he expects the New Zealand parliament may well consider the issue.

New Zealand Labour leader David Shearer has affirmed that he fully supports gay marriage "in principle".

The New Zealand Greens co-leader Metiria Turei said she is happy with the stand President Obama has taken particularly considering the current moral views in the United States.

"The US is very morally conservative on issues like sexual reproductive health, gay and lesbian rights and it is about time that the President took a strong stand in favour of the community and their right to be treated equally," she said.

Australian Marriage Equality spokesperson, Rodney Croome said Australia has been left standing alone among developed English-speaking democracies.

"Australia's national leaders are completely out-of-step with their counterparts in every other developed, English-speaking democracy - Canada, the UK, the US and now even New Zealand," Croome said.

"Like many other Australians I am bewildered and ashamed that our country is being isolated from those nations with which we share most, by two out-of-touch opponents of fundamental human rights."

"My hope is that Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott's increased isolation will compel them to reconsider their hard line," he said.

Ron Hughes, Alex Dunkin Gay News Network



<http://gaynewsnetwork.com.au/news/world/6347-australia-left-standing-alone-on-gay-marriage-ban.html>  
<http://www.google.com.au/imgres?q=rainbow+kiwi&um>

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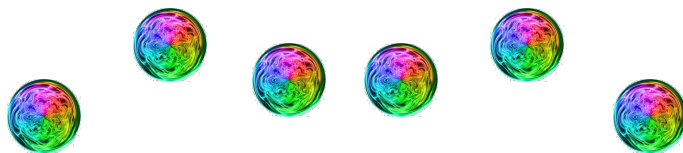
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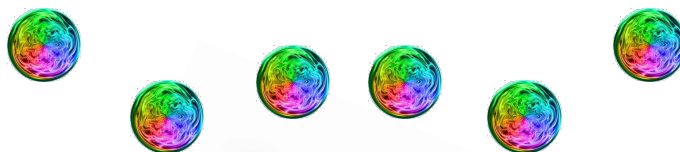
# Advocate



Since when do you have to  
agree with people to defend  
them from

injustice

Lillian Hellman



Contact Us

Mail: PO Box 1372

Eagle Farm BC Qld 4009

Ph: 07 3017 1739

Mobile Helpline

0400 767 832

E: [info@pflagbrisbane.org.au](mailto:info@pflagbrisbane.org.au)

W: [www.pflagbrisbane.org.au](http://www.pflagbrisbane.org.au)



### **Talking to Someone Who Really Understands Makes it So Much Easier**

Working through some of the deeper emotional issues with having a gay or lesbian son or daughter can be one of the most painful and stressful experiences of your life. Counselling is a highly effective way of feeling better and also can assist in keeping your family together. *Centre for Human Potential* have been working with parents of gays, lesbians and transgender for over 15 years. Contact one of our friendly psychologists to explore whether counselling can be of real benefit to you and your family, or simply call and book a time with one of us.

Phone: 3211 1117

Email: [info@centreforhumanpotential.com.au](mailto:info@centreforhumanpotential.com.au)



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# Keeping Families Together

PFLAG is very proactive in promoting acceptance and understanding of people who disclose their sexual diversity to family and loved ones. Parents often feel isolated, confused or angry when their loved one 'comes out' and this is an important area where PFLAG can offer assistance.

**Join us at our meetings, held every 2 months or contact us by  
phone: 0400 767 832 or email: [info@pflagbrisbane.org.au](mailto:info@pflagbrisbane.org.au)**

## **PFLAG Brisbane Annual Membership Form**

Please complete the form below and return to PFLAG.

You can also pay online - [www.pflagbrisbane.org.au](http://www.pflagbrisbane.org.au)

Larger donations are always welcome. Thanks for your support.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

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Membership Type:

Family - \$25.00 annually - I have included a cheque or Australia Post Money Order made out to PFLAG Brisbane Inc.

Corporate - \$100.00 annually - (includes website and newsletter advertising) I have included a cheque or Australia Post Money Order made out to PFLAG Brisbane Inc.

**Mail to:** PO Box 1372, Eagle Farm BC Qld. 4009

**Bring to:** 30 Helen St, Teneriffe 4006

**Pay Online:** [www.pflagbrisbane.org.au](http://www.pflagbrisbane.org.au)

**Pay direct deposit:** Account Name - PFLAG Brisbane

BSB - 124-001

Account No - 2023-8607

Bank of Queensland

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