

JUNE 2014

PFLAG Brisbane

Supporting families with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer loved ones

Change is coming



Safe Schools Coalition Australia was launched in style at the 2014 National Safe Schools Symposium in Melbourne with the backing of both sides of politics. Senator Scott Ryan and Senator Penny Wong were both present at the event.

More than 300 young people, teachers, principals, parents and community-sector staff attended the launch of the program which will be rolled out in all states and territories by 2015.

There were inspirational stories from young people about progress already being made in schools throughout the country. Workshops on gender diversity, campaigning for change and performances by the Theatre of the Oppressed were a great way to discuss new ideas for a safer and more inclusive environment for young people, school staff and families.

Several Queensland organisations were represented at the launch, including the education department of the Queensland Government.

In Queensland work is ongoing to determine the best way to deliver this program throughout this large and diverse state. For more on Safe Schools: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/>

PFLAG Ipswich

Some enthusiastic people have started a PFLAG in Ipswich. Social services and other parent groups in Ipswich have been approached to help the new group get going. To find out more, including the next meeting date, check out the new 'PFLAG Ipswich' Facebook page.



Starting a new PFLAG?

If you would like to become a PFLAG contact in your area, or establish and run a PFLAG group, we have information on our website titled 'How to establish and run a PFLAG group'. It has lots of suggestions and advice. Check it out here: http://www.pflagbrisbane.org.au/wp-content/uploads/How_to_establish_and_run_a_PFLAG_Group.pdf



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Your PFLAG.

Donation from Big Gay Day

PFLAG Brisbane have recently received a donation of \$7,500 from the proceeds of the Big Gay Day. We would like to thank Ruth Gardner at the Wickham Hotel very much for this generous donation to our work.

Coffee and chat at MacDonaldis

At 10.30am on Saturday 19 July we are having a get together at McDonald's Newmarket, 290 Enoggera Rd, Newmarket QLD 4051. We hope you will come along and join us for a coffee or whatever takes your fancy. It's a great opportunity to enjoy each other's company and share experiences.

Big Bake Off

This fund raising event is held on the last Sunday in August. The funds go towards supporting LGBT charities. PFLAG hopes to take part again this year. More information in the next newsletter.

Membership fees due 1st July

It's that time of the year when we would like to invite you to renew your PFLAG membership. Membership fees help us to do our work – we don't receive any government funding but rely on voluntary donations.

If you come along to our next meeting you can pay your membership then. Alternatively membership fees can be paid directly into our bank account.

Pflag Brisbane Inc
BSB: 124 011
Account: 2023 8607
Reference: Your name in full

Please send an email, including your full name and email address to our treasurer to let her know you have paid treasurer@pflagbrisbane.org.au

Protection against HIV

The visiting speaker at the June meeting of PFLAG Brisbane was Robert Muscolino, HIV project officer at Queensland Aids Council.

He spoke to us about current initiatives to reduce the infection rate from HIV.

Testing point is a service that provides FREE (with Medicare Card) after hours peer based HIV/STI testing to the LGBTI community on Tuesday nights from 6-8pm at 30 Helen St Teneriffe. Testing Point is run by volunteer nurses and volunteer private GPs. To attend the clinic you can just walk in on the Tuesday night (with your Medicare Card).

Ending HIV is a campaign aimed at reducing the number of new cases of HIV to zero by the end of the decade. Watch the national campaign video to learn more:
<http://endinghiv.org.au/>

Volunteers are employed by QAC to reach out to gay men in a range of venues and events to promote sexual health, encourage protection against HIV infection by using condoms and water based lubricants, stress the importance of regular testing and prompt access to treatment if needed. To become a volunteer you can contact QAC on (07) 3017 1777, weekdays between 9am and 5pm.

A useful source of information about the sexually transmitted infections (STIs) most commonly experienced by gay men can be found at:
<http://www.thedramadownunder.info/introduction>

You can contact Robert by phoning the Queensland Aids Council on 3017 1777 or following him on Facebook at Robert Quac.



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School Chaplains

The High Court recently decided that the law was invalid for the Commonwealth's funding agreement with the Scripture Union of Queensland for school chaplains. This was a decision on the power of the Commonwealth to make laws. It was not a judgment on the work of the school chaplains - in fact the court made positive comments about the pastoral care role of school chaplains.

School chaplains are integral to the school communities in which they work and provide a point of reference for students who are experiencing bullying, disadvantage or ostracism. The Scripture Union in Queensland is participating in the current action to deliver Safe Schools Coalition Australia to Queensland schools and offers training to chaplains to support LGBTIQ students who may feel isolated at school and possibly in their own home.

While not all PFLAG members agree with having school chaplains, we appreciate the care and support they provide to all young people including our LGBTIQ children.

Senate Inquiry launched – express your support for marriage equality

The Australian Senate is conducting an inquiry into the impact of marriage equality overseas, as well as the ban on recognising overseas same-sex marriages in Australia.

Australian Marriage Equality (AME) national director, Rodney Croome, said, "We encourage all supporters of marriage equality to send in submissions."

To make it easier for you to have your say, AME has set up a special webpage that sets out the issues and allows you to spend a few minutes sending your views: <http://www.australianmarriageequality.org/senate-inquiry/>

Interesting findings from LGBT Suicide Study

A recent Griffith study into suicide in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people has found family conflict and rejection is one of the **least** likely reasons for suicide. The research revealed a general acceptance at the family level, which was a really heartening result.

Researcher, Dr Delaney Skerrett, and colleagues from the Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention (AISRAP) have been conducting research over the last year to find out more about the factors related to LGBTI suicide.

"I have to say I was surprised about the family conflict part. We tend to assume that the psychological distress LGBTI people are often going through is due to family rejection. But it seems that's not so much the case," says Dr Skerrett. "The conflict seems to be largely related to relationship problems, with partners."

As the debate around marriage equality continues, Dr Skerrett may have found deeper issues around why diverse relationships need to be celebrated. "LGBTI people are still facing stigma and a lack of acceptance in society and that plays out in various ways in their lives, like relationship conflict. If your relationship seems less valid than that of your straight friends and family, your problems are less valid too, which means they're not addressed."

In more predictable findings, the survey found LGBTI people who died from suicide are more likely to suffer depression than straight Australians.

If your LGBTI friend, family member or loved one died by suicide and you wish contribute to Dr Skerrett's study please email: d.skerrett@griffith.edu.au

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The poster features a colorful sky with blue, yellow, and orange clouds. The title 'Family Picnic in the Park' is written in a green, bubbly font. Below it, the date and location are listed: 'Saturday 28th of June' and 'New Farm Park'. The time '11am to 3pm' is also included. A rainbow flag on a pole stands to the left of a wooden picnic basket with 'PICNIC' written on it. To the right of the basket is a sign with the PFLAG logo. At the bottom, there is a small logo for 'open Doors'.

You are invited to attend Open Doors Youth Service annual Picnic in the Park event being held on 28th of June 2014 from 11am til 3pm. Meet near the big gazebo in the main park area close to the river. Look for Pride flags!! Picnic food provided. For further information, please contact Open Doors 07 32577660 or email opendoors@opendoors.net.au

PFLAG/Open Doors

BBQ in the park

On Saturday 28 June, 11am to 3pm

PFLAG is joining forces with Open Doors Youth Service for a Family BBQ in New Farm Park.

Everyone Welcome

"Hope will never be silent"

- Harvey Milk

PFLAG Brisbane

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Follow us on *Twitter* via @PFLAGbris

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Membership Fees - the easiest way to pay is to transfer money to our account:

Pflag Brisbane Inc

BSB: 124 011

Account: 2023 8607

Reference: Your name in full

And **please send an email** giving your full name, email address and whether you are an existing or new member to: treasurer@pflagbrisbane.org.au

Personal/family membership: \$25/yr

Business membership: \$100/yr (includes advert)