

FEBRUARY 2014

PFLAG Brisbane

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

From the Treasurer



Hi everyone,

☺ Firstly Very Important Info below with regards to paying your PFLAG Brisbane membership fees:

The options available to you to pay for your memberships are either in cash at a meeting or to pop a cheque or money order in the mail to us. Of course the easiest and most practical is to go online and transfer funds to our account.

Pflag Brisbane Inc

BSB: 124 011

Account: 2023 8607

Reference: Your name in full

Email me: treasurer@pflagbrisbane.org.au

In order for me to receipt you and to ensure that your membership details are up to date could you PLEASE PLEASE email me once you have completed the transaction. Just a quick note saying that you've:

- Renewed your membership and details remain the same, or
- New membership and provide your full name and email address, or
- Membership renewal and donation etc etc

Personal / family membership: \$25/yr
Business membership: \$100/yr (includes advert)
T Shirts: \$25.00

Now onto the exciting news!!



We, along with many other organisations, are starting to 'feel the pinch' and realise that we need to get up and be a bit more proactive with regards to our income.

I'm fortunate enough to work once a week with the absolute angels over at Open Doors Youth Service, and they are also doing it a bit tough. They rely heavily on grants and Rocky has a constant battle on her hands trying to source additional funds so that she can help the young LGBTI people of Brisbane. So we have decided to join forces with them and hold a fundraising night of fun for us all.

PLEASE KEEP FRIDAY THE 31ST OCTOBER FREE!

We've formed a small committee of helpers; me, Rocky, Deb (Pflag parent), Ruth (Open Doors management committee member and manager of the Wickham Hotel) and a young Open Doors volunteer and marketing student, Sarah.

We are obviously in the early stages of organising this event but we will keep you updated with our progress and no doubt will be sending out an SOS from time to time ☺

Take care and if I don't see you at a meeting I'll see you at the beach!

Lynn x



FEBRUARY 2014

My Story

It was not long after my child had told me he was transgender (FTM) that we had an appointment for a uniform fitting at a new school. At the time we still said "she" not "he"; he'd been enrolled as female after all, and it was very early days. He wasn't sure if he would pass for a boy.

The uniform policy allowed girls to wear trousers, so that part was easy. What we didn't realise until we arrived for the fitting was that the style of the shirts and blazers were slightly different for boys and girls. He tried on both and decided to get the girls' shirts and the boys' blazer. Let me check if that's ok, I said. It was busy, lots of other new families were there at the same time. Please don't make a fuss, he begged, it's ok I'll get the girls' blazer. Quietly, I asked the woman helping us to check. It took only a minute for her to return from the principal's office to say yes, you can have the boys' blazer. So he chose the boys' blazer.

It was important for me to ask, I told him, because it's important to hear the answer - I know you're in the right place.

For a kid who's never been interested in clothes, he wore the new blazer around the house for the rest of the day.

The start of the new school year went well. I've since gone back to get the boys' shirts. I explained to the woman helping us that we now say "he" instead of "she". She asked me if I was ok. And I smiled, yes. (Mother's name withheld)



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No need to feel shame



Paul Martin was our visiting speaker at the PFLAG meeting on 1 February. Paul is a psychologist who has counselled LGBTIQ families for 25 years and now trains other psychologists in helping LGBTIQ people.

Paul talked to us about shame, an emotion experienced by almost all the LGBTIQ people and families that he counsels.

Shame can begin when a young person realises they are different from their friends and slowly works out that they are gay. They frequently experience internalised homophobia, that is they dislike who they are because they have heard friends and family make homophobic remarks over the years and now realise those remarks are aimed at people like themselves.

Parents and other family members can feel shame as well. They may feel that they have done something wrong that resulted in their child being gay. They are afraid to tell other family members, friends or neighbours and often imagine other people are disgusted by their child when this is usually not true at all. Parents who experience and exhibit shame can fuel the negative shameful feelings of their child. This puts unbearable pressure on the child, which can result in depression, self harm and, at worst, suicide.

Counselling encourages the family to face up to the situation and realise that their gay child is not something to be ashamed of but a unique individual to be loved and appreciated. Parents are leaders in the family and it is important that their approach, openness about their gay child, and the unconditional love they express for their child are a good example to others around them.

Paul Martin can be contacted at:
paulmartinpsych@outlook.com

FEBRUARY 2014

Safe Schools Coalition Australia

The Australian Government Department of Education has provided four years of funding to deliver "Safe Schools Coalition Australia" (SSCA). It will be based on the program already operating in Victoria (<http://safeschoolscoalitionvictoria.org.au/>) and rolled out in a staged approach to every Australian state and territory by 2015.

SSCA will be managed by The Foundation for Young Australians. It will deliver on the National Safe Schools Framework's vision that "All Australian schools are safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student wellbeing." An important element of this vision is that diversity is valued and that all members of the school community feel respected, included and supported.

PFLAG is naturally delighted that the federal government is supporting LGBTIQ school children across all Australia. We will provide full assistance to the program director to ensure that it reaches Queensland as soon as possible.

For more information
<http://www.fya.org.au/initiatives/safe-schools-coalition-australia/>

PFLAG Brisbane meeting dates

Saturday 5 April 2014
Saturday 14 June 2014
Saturday 2 August 2014
Saturday 11 October 2014
Saturday 6 December 2014

Events for your diary

Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade – Saturday, 1 March
Big Gay Day – Sunday 9 March at The Wickham Hotel, Brisbane
International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia – Saturday May 17 at New Farm Park

Griffith University study

Has a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Intersex (LGBTI) person close to you died by suicide?

The Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention (AISRAP) at Griffith University, in conjunction with beyondblue, is conducting a study to learn more about the processes that lead to suicide in LGBTI individuals, to assist in developing better strategies for preventing suicide in LGBTI people in Australia. AISRAP would like to interview friends and relatives of LGBTI people who have lost their lives to suicide. Participants must be at least 18 years of age and will be interviewed for approximately two to three hours, with compensation given for their time. Their contribution will be completely confidential. To participate in this study please contact Dr Delaney Skerrett on (07) 3735 3393 or via email on d.skerrett@griffith.edu.au

Homophobia and transphobia linked to mental health problems

A new report has been published by the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre on the issues faced by young people who are LGBTIQ. It can be accessed through this website:
<http://www.yawcrc.org.au/news/article/263>

The research finds that homophobic and transphobic bullying is related to mental health issues in many who are growing up as LGBTIQ. It suggests that LGBTIQ young people are around six times more likely to consider taking their own life than their heterosexual peers, reflecting similar findings in other research in this area.

Parents of trans support group

The next meeting is 1 March at The Gap, Brisbane. Paul Martin will be there to talk to everyone. Parents and other family members are welcome. Please phone Shelley on 0409 363 335 for more information.

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FEBRUARY 2014



Big Gay Day

Big Gay Day is a fundraiser for LGBT charities. PFLAG Brisbane are grateful to be one of the beneficiaries this year.

At the Wickham Hotel and surrounding Alden Street, Fortitude Valley.

Sunday 9 March from 12 noon.

An 18+ event.

PFLAG Brisbane are seeking funding to bulk print more leaflets and brochures. We have just about run out.

We send printed materials free of charge across Australia - to parents, LGBTIQ people and groups such as schools, police stations, universities, community centres, health organisations and aged care facilities.

Please be patient until we can get more printed.

“Do we have to know who’s gay and who’s straight? Can’t we just love everybody and judge them by the car they drive!!”

— Ellen Degeneres

PFLAG Brisbane

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