

PFLAG BRISBANE NEWSLETTER



Volume 3: June / July 2017

Welcome Brisbane PFLAG Members,

Here we are already half way through the year. As you will see, as you read the newsletter PFLAG is still busy and always moving forward. There is always plenty to do. It is just great to see more parents of trans youth coming along to our meetings. Some are seeking support and others providing support. Better still I just love the attitudes of the parents. It's a difficult path but parents realise it isn't about them, it's about their children.

As one parent of a trans child commented at the meeting "It's better to have a live son, than a dead daughter. And, more importantly people who aren't supportive of my child can go their own way." Times are certainly changing, we had two grandmothers attend the meeting this time, as supporters of their daughters and to gain more information for them to understand their grandchildren.

So, I would recommend to those who are concerned about telling grandparents, not to be so concerned. Generally, they are pretty good. And, if grandparents when told, do have concerns we are more than happy to talk with them individually or they are most welcome to attend meetings.

Shelley

June Meeting Guest Speaker

Parker from QLD AIDS Council – who leads the 'Many Genders One Voice' Support Group - was our June meeting guest speaker. Parker discussed what being non-binary means. In simple terms, we learned that people who are non-binary sit between the two genders. The problem for many is they don't fit into how society views people which automatically makes life more difficult for some.

Parker believes that parents need to be supportive while not trying to put their loved into a box. Pronouns generally are "They" and "Their", never he or she. Brisbane does have a social group for young people who fit into this category which is very helpful for the young person by breaking the isolation. Contact Shelley for further information.



Passages: Rocky Malone from Open Doors

Many of you would have had young ones go to Open Doors for support. And, many would have got to know Rocky. Rocky, I always felt was very sincere and supportive of the young people she worked with. Unfortunately, a few weeks ago Rocky was killed in a single vehicle accident in Rockhampton.



Rocky, to me personally was a true and loyal friend who was well respected in the LGBTIQ and ATSI community. She will be greatly missed by many. Shelley

Public Opinion: The Court has spoken but the jury is out

Recently, Margaret Court, a prominent Australian and former Grand Slam Tennis Champion, went public with her views on LGBTIQ people, in particular, her negative opinions on gay marriage and transgender children, which she says are “Being influenced by the devil”. Ms Court says her views are based on her deep understanding and belief of the Christian scriptures. Publicly, these comments have drawn a wide range of responses, including condemnation and disappointment from many prominent people, that someone of Ms Court’s profile would feel compelled to publicly express such a narrow minded and hurtful point of view.



Whilst we live in a wonderful country, where freedom of speech is a cherished right. People with a public profile have the added responsibility to understand all aspects of an issue before going on the public record.

Margaret Court’s comments highlight the importance of PFLAG and our partner organisations, and the role we play in helping to support families, educate the community and promote a deeper, human understanding of LGBTIQ issues.

We thought it would be interesting to hear Shelley’s view’s on Ms Court’s comments and the media attention it created.

Shelley, how did Margaret Court’s comments make you feel?

I feel sad for Margaret, she is a woman held in high esteem but her comments are clearly out of date. In some respects, this is helpful to our cause, as everyone realised that her comments are without any logical basis. I am afraid that Margaret Court has lost a lot of her credibility.

Has the media responded appropriately to these comments?

The media have given a lot of air time to Margaret Court. She has been very vocal about the discrimination she has endured since airing her views. Whilst I certainly don’t condone the hate mail she has received; my concern is that the media has not sought to balance the issue and give reasonable air time to the LGBTIQ advocates.

What are the impacts and implications of these kinds of public comments?

Minimal impact really. There will always be those willing to express ignorant views. In fact, I really believe Margaret’s comments were helpful, as they highlight how flawed and outdated the arguments against LGBTIQ rights really are.

What can we learn from this experience?

We can learn to ignore and rise above the noise and negativity. We shall keep moving forward in a positive, constructive way to facilitate acceptance and understanding and advocate for equality.

Multicultural Outreach Project

As part of efforts to support for Parents with English as a second language, PFLAG are in the early stages of developing support resources for parents from diverse cultures and religious beliefs. If you would like to volunteer to be a support for families from similar cultures as you or feel comfortable to translate, we would love to hear from you.

If you have any special expertise you may be interested in assisting us to get this project/service up and running effectively please contact Shelley - pflagbris@bigpond.com



Marriage Equality Update

Marriage equality is still an ongoing issue with the present government. PFLAG recently commissioned a Galaxy Poll which showed that the clear majority of voters are tired of the procrastination and lack of will to act. The Poll showed that just on this issue alone they are likely to lose the next election, unless they act soon. This Poll included Coalition and Christian voters.

Shelley also travelled to Canberra, mid-June to meet with several MPs and Senators to ensure marriage equality remains on their agenda.

PFLAG has initiated a new campaign encouraging Malcolm Turnbull to have a Free Vote - www.givemalcolmabackbone.com.au. This campaign encourages everyone to sign a letter which will be sent to Mr Turnbull and several MPs. Presently, more than 5000 letters have been sent. We need as many people as possible to sign and send.

Equality for our children is vital. **Please text BACKBONE to 0400 722 722** or go to www.makeitlaw.com and send your message there.

A text takes 15 seconds to send and costs PFLAG 12 cents to ensure Malcolm Turnbull knows we are serious about marriage equality.

Please let your voice be heard and send Malcolm Turnbull a message that you believe in equality - www.givemalcolmabackbone.com.au



**LET'S GIVE
MALCOLM A
BACKBONE**



PFLAG Membership



PFLAG is organised and resourced by volunteers and 100% of our funds, including your membership fees, goes to improving our services to you and parents seeking support. We are encouraging people to ensure they pay their annual membership (\$25). Whilst paid membership is not compulsory to receive support, it does help us to improve PFLAG resources, keep our website up to date and help cover some of our general administration costs. Go to our membership webpage @ www.pflagbrisbane.org.au/membership for more information.

PFLAG Committee Updates

- **HISTORY of PFLAG** - PFLAG are seeking the support of a motivated Uni student to undertake a project to document the history of PFLAG. If you know someone who might be interested, please encourage them to contact us at pflagbris@bigpond.com
- **WEAR IT PURPLE DAY - August 25th**
We are looking for volunteers to assist Pasi on a stall in Queens Park. Wear it Purple day began in 2010. It's a day that is intended to encourage pride and self-worth in LGBTIQ youth. It's a day that highlights the need for protection of youth in school which will minimise homophobia and transphobia and encourage respect of difference in each other. **Please contact Pasi 0468 433 692 if you would like to volunteer.**
- **TRANS RESOURCES –**

- PFLAG has worked with Evie Ryder to develop resources for the Lady Cilento Gender Centre for children. Evie has done a great job collating the resources for the children as they transition and their parents.
- PFLAG has bought additional books for parents of trans children to help increase their understanding as their children transition. The books will be available at meetings for parents to borrow



Our next PFLAG Brisbane Meeting

Date – 12th August / Time - 1.30pm
Place - 30 Helen Street, Newstead

Guest Speaker: Gianna Parmesan

Gianna Parmesan from True (formerly Qld Family Planning) will be discussing the Safe Schools Project and how it will be presented to teachers. If you have any queries about the validity of this project in State High Schools or just interested please come along. Everyone is most welcome.

Best Wishes,

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