



Welcome

Here we are back in to full swing and it's only March. I hoped the year may start off quietly but it's not to be. This year we have 3 volunteers going into the QUAC office to take calls while working towards making PFLAG a stronger presence here in Queensland.

But please keep in mind we need your support financially and sometimes physically to keep a visible presence. Our group needs to be clearly seen in the community for future parents dealing with the confusion of their child's sexual diversity.

I hope that most who read our newsletters have come to terms with this by now, but I am sure most of us remember how difficult it was to find assistance when we were experiencing our concerns and issues. So please be generous and make it easier for others to find support.

PFLAG website

I hope you have all checked out the website by now. It looks great!

Jenny has also included a section for parents on bullying in schools on how to document and counteract this abuse in schools.

The website address is:
pflagbrisbane.org.au

- Shelley

Equality and Age of Consent

On Feb. 13 Meryl, Maxine and myself attended a rally for the age of consent and equality. It's typical of States and federal government never agreeing on anything. ACT is 16 for everyone, another State is 17 being the age of consent and then other states like Queensland have 16 being the age of consent for heterosexual couples and 18 for same sex male couples. But for lesbians this could be seen as a big yawn, no one seems to care about them and there is no clear age bracket. Perhaps it's to do with penetration.

I was asked to be a spokesperson if necessary and so did some research for a media release. The research showed that many gay youth are hesitant to seek safe sex information from credible sources and are embarrassed to have sexual health checks and more importantly fearful because if they are found to have and STD or STI they are fearful their partner may be charged. This it seems to me to be discrimination not protection of gay youth.

The research also showed that there is no evidence regarding the concern about sexual predators preying on gay youth. This is totally an unfounded fear. The research also showed that sexual equality (and having access to safe sex information) doesn't mean they will be more permissive, in fact it showed the reverse. The research also showed young people regardless of sexual orientation often begin sexual relations later; or if they do begin early they are more informed and more responsible in their actions.

Unfortunately, I think it will be a long time before this law changes regardless of which party is in power.

Events - Sexpo

This went well again this year, but I think we need to consider that if we are to continue with this project we need plenty of people to be present at the stall to hand out information and answer questions.

Many thanks, to Lyn and Kieran for their efforts and organising this event this year. As usual we had plenty of "passer by's" interested in PFLAG and asking questions.

SDA Kinship

PFLAG was also invited to a Seventh Day Adventist Kinship meeting on the 6th February. Meryl and I attended.

They had 2 interesting speakers, provided a light lunch and importantly it seemed a comfort for many who felt ostracised by their churches.

If you would like more information phone 3321 1101.

Vilification Campaign

This is going well. In middle February we sent 50 letters to different LGBT groups and gay friendly organisations requesting letters of support. The letters will go out to the different media outlets in very early March. We sent a copy of the letter we plan to send with a standard letter of support.

Additionally, we requested that if they would like to write their own letter we would gladly pass it on with the PFLAG letter. We also plan to encourage other PFLAG groups around Australia to take part. We have had assistance with this project from Anti Discrimination Commission Qld. and a human rights lawyer from Legal Aid.

Events - The 'Big Gay Day'

We need plenty of volunteers to help with this event. Gay and Lesbian Welfare Association and PFLAG are to be the recipients of funds raised on one of the biggest fun gay days here in Brisbane.

So we need your help to ensure that we can fundraise as much as possible which will go towards advertising, resources and generally getting the word out about PFLAG. Phone Maxine on 33432295 if you would like to help.

The Big Gay Day is on at The Wickham Hotel on March 13th 2005. These days are great fun!!

Events - Country Trip

This is well into the planning now. We have sent letters to several regional areas letting them know when we plan to be in the local towns.

We have contacted the local radio stations and papers, so now we will wait and see if we get any responses.

But if they're slow in responding we will certainly do follow ups to remind them we are planning on visiting.

For more information about this trip, please contact Shelley at PFLAG Brisbane.

Gay Penguins?

This article printed in "Good Mail" Feb. 20 Sunday Mail and was also aired on Channel 10 news the previous week may relieve some parents who have concerns about sexual orientation being a choice or chosen lifestyle.

continued on page 3...

Next PFLAG meeting

Our guest speaker will be Susan Booth, Commissioner for the Anti Discrimination Commission of Queensland who will be speaking about vilification and the media.

Date: 9th April

Time: 1:30pm

Location: Cnr Edmonstone Street and Melbourne Street, West End.

Parking is available at the rear of the building (off Edmonstone Street). Hope to see you there!

Membership

Please remember we are 100% voluntary and receive no government funding. Plus now we have costs because Queensland Health no longer permit the Queensland AIDS Council to financially support any LGBT organization we really need your support.

PFLAG relies on private donations and membership fees and PFLAG is tax deductible because we operate under the auspices of Queensland AIDS Council.

To renew your membership, or to become a member, please call Shelley. Membership is \$25 annually.

Gay Penguins (cont...)

Zookeepers in Bremen, Germany, were baffled that their penguins had produced no chicks despite years of mating. The puzzle was solved when they discovered the six birds were all gay males. Four females were imported from Sweden since the discovery and all have been ignored.

It seems to me that they were doing what comes naturally to them free from religious, family and societal pressures. What a shame we can't be like the penguins. How wonderful it would be for our children!

Our sponsors

Please support our sponsors, so they can continue to support us!

Harrison Plumbing and Gas Services

Email. harrisonplumbing@powerup.com.au
Ph. 3298-5888
Mob. 0418-739-859

Allan & Dean prefer to work on the north side of Brisbane

Stonewall Medical Centre

52 Newmarket Road, Newmarket
Telephone 3857 1222



PFLAG Brisbane (Shelley Argent)

Mail: PO Box 3142 South Brisbane 4101
Office: 187 Melbourne Street, West End 4101
Phone: (07) 3017 1739
Email: pflagbris@hotmail.com



The PFLAG Brisbane newsletter is designed & edited by Andy Pudmenzky
www.bigbuddaboom.com.au



PFLAG Brisbane is totally voluntary and organised by parents. Please support us.

You can assist by advertising here.
Contact Shelley today, on (07) 3017 1739

Busigroup International Organisation

Email. rosy@busigroup.com "Practical solutions and professional advice for the betterment of industry"
Web. www.busigroup.com

Gladstone Road Medical Centre

38 Gladstone Road, Highgate Hill 4101
Telephone 3844-9599