



President's Welcome

For all, regardless of age, the year moves quickly – our first meeting 30 January was well attended with some new faces and we hope they left with some sense of comfort. We like for any newcomer to leave with some form of telephone or email contact made from within the support group.

'The World Needs All Kinds of Music – parents need to recognize and accept this aspect of their child's identity and nurture it socially, spiritually and culturally. The process ideally should start way before a child comes out with his or her orientation. Children need to learn there are many ways to be in this world. We must do more than merely accept. We have to validate and cherish all of our gay children and help them grow into this identity and this culture. It's a new journey for our children and for us. They shouldn't have to take the journey all by themselves – and if we are lucky they will share their lives with us.' This extract was taken from *Out of the Closet – Into our Hearts* – Leyland Publications – details available on our website.

In early February I attended a workshop at Mermaid Beach with around thirty other agency folk to further advance our communication skills with the LGBTI community and to further the work offered through Pflag. One of the outcomes from this day was an offer to attend Q Space at Southport which offers safe space for children on Fridays 4:00 – 6:00pm. Some are out, some are not and for them it is good to chat with another mum or for me to simply be a good listener with relative comment. I shall commence this early March on a monthly basis.

The Surrogacy Bill 2009 debate captured much of our attention and energy.

I was welcomed by Neighbourhood Watch Annerley Branch at Buranda for yet another moment of sharing

the role of PFLAG in the community – resource material and the function of the group was well received. I shared the day with Monica O'Mara, State Coordinator for LGBTI Police Liaison Officers, Linda Petrie representing the Transgender community and the local Council member – I stepped up to the plate with this one as Shelley was on holiday in Vietnam.

Another event was an open day welcoming parents of gay children held by Open Doors – yet again opportunity to network with professionals who attended the bbq and shared their experience together with meeting with the parents who were there in support of their child.

*- Margaret Parkhill
President, PFLAG Brisbane*

Next Meeting

PFLAG Brisbane's next meeting will be on **Saturday 20th March, 2010**.

Time: 1.30pm

Place: 30 Helen Street, Newstead (down the driveway to the Training Room at the rear of the building)

Big Gay Day - Sunday 7th March, 2010

On again and it is ten years with involvement by PFLAG and are one of the nominations to receive funds from the proceeds of the day to further our work with the LGBTI community. A big thank you is extended to those who have offered their time for this important day.

Where: The Wickham Hotel, 308 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley.

For more details, please see: www.biggayday.com.au

“That’s So Gay” is so yesterday

These posters continue to slowly filter their way from our office to various community groups, health nurses and across the ocean to PFLAG and community youth support group in the South Island New Zealand.

Our colourful *Ally* postcards which are being souvenired from hotels and movie houses have found their way there too.

Website Enquiries

Website enquires continue to be strong, whether it is a request of resources materials, request for contact with an issue or referral to another part of the country.

There are substantial downloads for the *Sexuality is not a Choice* booklet in various language translations - the website has proven to be a valuable tool.

Be sure to bookmark us, via www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

Membership

Annual membership (\$25 per family) is now due. Corporate membership is \$100 per year which entitles a business to advertise in our newsletter and on our website – if you own a business or know someone who does - they may like to advertise with us.

Membership application/renewal and donations may be made via our website – www.pflagbrisbane.org.au – click on “Membership/Donations”.

A membership form has been enclosed with this newsletter should you desire to send cheque/money order made payable Pflag Brisbane.

Shelley’s Report - Parental Recognition and Surrogacy Legislation

How exciting our gay sons can now legally become fathers. Plus our daughters in same sex relationships with partners who have had IVF are now to be recognised officially as a parent, in the relationship, by Queensland and Federal Law.

This is thanks to the legislation passed mid February in Queensland Parliament.

As a parent of a gay male I remember the discussion with my son many years ago about how he could never become a father because of the legal repercussions. Now parents of sons need never have this conversation, because it is possible. This legislation also addresses the issue for many parents who grieve that they will never become grand-parents.

This legislation also provides our sons and daughters who aren’t the birth parents with emotional and financial security. It also removes the issue of next of kin for the child which assists in added security for the child and second parent, should the birth parent die or become incapacitated and unable to care for the child.

I believe the legislation will permit a back date of 5 years for couples who have had babies by IVF or other artificial reproductive treatments to place their names on their children’s birth certificates and be seen as family units. Unfortunately, this legislation doesn’t address the issue of adoption but it is still a huge step forward for our sons and daughters living in Queensland.

It is important to be aware that PFLAG has sent thank you letters to all Members of Parliament who voted in favour of this legislation.

We also sent flowers to Anna Bligh and Cameron Dick the Attorney General. The committee felt it important that we acknowledge this milestone.

I would also like to thank all of the parents who wrote and called their Members of Parliament reminding them of the need for change. Your letters and efforts went a long way to changing minds on which way to vote.

- Shelley Argent
National Spokesperson, PFLAG

Marriage Equality

Until the next federal election we need people to write and say how they want equality in marriage for their same sex attracted sons and daughters. Please point out that they don’t need to be authors, I just want simple

personal letters expressing their desire for marriage equality for their child - just a couple of paragraphs is fine. They don't need to put their address, just their name.

The plan is to send letters from parents each week to every Federal MP until election or some progress. I also plan to send a letter every week from PFLAG nationally, but personal letters have proven to be most effective. I also plan to send regular letters from PFLAG to Unions seeking support

I need the letters sent to my email address pflagbris@bigpond.com so I can send them off to every Pollie or they can be mailed to **PO Box 1372 Eagle Farm QLD 4009**

Here are some tips of those unsure of what to write:

- *L&G child is equal to siblings*
- *Marriage removes legal confusion*
- *It's how society celebrates relationships*
- *Your Lesbian & Gay child's relationship is just as valid as anyone else's*
- *Mention how long your child has been in a relationship*
- *Marriage is about making a life together and planning for old age*
- *Marriage brings respect and stability to the relationship*
- *Marriage for s/s couples doesn't lessen the meaning of marriage for straights*
- *Marriage shows the couples are serious about their relationship*
- *Many Lesbians & Gays want to follow the traditional path of marriage*
- *Marriage isn't always about children, it's about love and the recognition of a relationship.*

PFLAG Brisbane Annual Membership Form

Please complete the form below and return to PFLAG. You can also pay online, via www.pflagbrisbane.org.au. Larger donations are always welcome. Thanks for your support!

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing address:

Email: _____

Membership type:

- Family (\$25 annually - I have included a cheque or Australia Post Money Order)
- Corporate (\$100 annually [incl. website & news letter advertising]; I have included a cheque or Australia Post money Order)

Mail to: PO Box 1372 Eagle Farm BC, QLD 4009 , or...

Bring to: 30 Helen Street, Newstead 4006, or...

Pay online at: www.pflagbrisbane.org.au, or into our account (*Bank of Qld / BSB: 124-001 / Acct: 2023-8607*).

Thank you!



Big Budda Boom
connecting your senses

The PFLAG Brisbane newsletter is
Designed & compiled by Big Budda Boom

www.bigbuddaboom.com.au or info@bigbuddaboom.com.au

Video to DVD // Corporate events & Staging // Artwork & Design
Web design & hosting // Audio engineering

pflag

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Phone: 3017 1739 or the helpline on 0400 767 832

Email: info@pflagbrisbane.org.au

Internet: www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

PFLAG is totally voluntary & organised by parents.
Please support us. You can assist by advertising here.
For more information, please contact Shelley Argent.



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 could be of real benefit to you and your family, or simply call and book a time with one of us.

If you are not familiar with how to access the Medicare rebate, one of our receptionists would be more than happy to speak to you about this.

Phone 3211 1117 or you can email us on
info@centreforhumanpotential.com.au

ADVERTISE HERE!

Contact Shelley on 3017 1739