



PARENTS AND FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS

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Newsletter Update for January

Happy New Year everyone, I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year with loved ones' and friends. Mine was great, I had my boys and their partners at home and so of course the house was buzzing.

This is a fill in newsletter, just to keep everyone up to date with what has been happening.

Committee:

The new committee was formed at the December meeting. Antoneta was elected as our new Secretary, Pasi is now the Treasurer and Debra is the vice president. Pasi is not the first male to be on the PFLAG committee, but he is the first male to take an official position. Lynn and Beth are Committee Members. I was re elected as President.

We do have a couple of places left if anyone is interested in becoming part of our committee. We just ask that Committee Members attend most committee meetings and be filled with enthusiasm and ideas on how we can keep moving PFLAG forward. Meetings begin at 11am and are held on the day of the general meeting.

Mardi Gras:

Several Brisbane PFLAG parents are off to Mardi Gras which will be fun. If interested contact me so I can give your name to PFLAG NSW and you can be included in the parade. Mardi Gras is very strict with numbers and the PFLAG float is only permitted 200 marchers.

Upcoming Queensland Election:

Many parents may not be aware that within weeks of forming government three years ago the LNP watered down the legislation for civil partnerships to such an extent that it became meaningless and now renamed as a Relationship Register. Many feel like it is equivalent to registering the dog or the car.

The LNP are still unclear if the Surrogacy legislation that permits our LGTBI children and their partners to have a baby of their own will continue in its present form of being inclusive.

The LNP have refused to abolish the Gay Panic Defence which means according to law our LGTBI children can be murdered and this defence be used for a hate crime. Other States with Liberal Governments have abolished this loop hole, so why can't Qld?

The LNP are also very, very slow in actively considering the erasing of historical gay sex convictions. This is relevant to many gay men in the "Joh day" when to be gay in Queensland was a crime pre 1990. Other States with Liberal Governments have made the changes, so why can't Qld?

The above pieces of legislation will cost nothing to repeal but, they will provide our sons and daughters with dignity and respect and will not affect the economy, regardless of whether it is good or bad.

We are also asking the question to the LNP about when they plan to implement the Safe School Project into our State high schools. Very simply put, this is a policy and plan to keep LGBTI students safe and to allow trans* youth to be themselves which again is working well in other States with Liberal Governments.

Many parents may not be aware that when the LNP came into power they defunded the Qld AIDS Council, which is the first place those in the LGBTI community go for support and referrals. It now operates with skeleton staff and a shoestring budget.

I would suggest to parents that they ask their local MP where they stand on LGBTI rights and let your thoughts be known. No one needs to "out" themselves or their child, just by standing up for what is right.

Marriage Equality:

This is an issue that seems to have gone a little quiet, but it won't be long and the Coalition will have to make the decision about a conscience vote for MPs.

The Big Gay Day:

We will give you more information about this later. It is a fun day held at the Wickham Hotel mid March. It is a great fund raising day for PFLAG, Open Doors and ATSAQ which is a trans* support group.

The Next Meeting:

Date: Saturday 7th February

Time: 1.30

Place: 30 Helen Street, Newstead

Guest Speaker:

Faith is a psychologist and will discuss the stress young people experience when "coming out".