

MAY 2014

# PFLAG Brisbane

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

## Message from the secretary

Being secretary of PFLAG is hugely interesting and very rewarding. I get involved in a range of discussions, decisions and activities. People contact us by phone, email or via the website or facebook page. They may need support and information, want to know about the PFLAG meetings or they may be inviting PFLAG Brisbane to join in other LGBTIQ activities in Brisbane.

In the last few weeks I've represented PFLAG at several meetings and events.

Most important for me is the action group set up by PFLAG to support all LGBTIQ young people in Queensland schools. More about this later in the newsletter.

I joined Phil Browne from Brisbane Lesbian and Gay Action Group (BLAG) at a meeting with Kelly at Brisbane City Council (BCC). Kelly helps community groups achieve their potential and advises on the support and grants available from BCC.

I went along to Queeriosity, the event held by Open Doors Youth Service for LGBTIQ young people to have some fun on a Saturday afternoon. While there I met and had some very useful conversations with Mel and Warwick from the Queensland Police LGBTIQ liaison group and with Glen from Qspace on the Gold Coast.

And along with others on the committee I went to the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia and talked to lots of people about the work PFLAG does to reduce homophobia.

We receive calls for help from many parents of gay and trans children, and from gay people themselves. It is a privilege to be there for them, to be allowed to hear their story and their struggle and offer them the support of PFLAG.

In PFLAG we quietly and confidently work at changing attitudes in our society. Why not come and join us.

Janet, secretary PFLAG Brisbane



PFLAG committee members (from left to right) Deb, Janet, Lynn and Linzi at the IDAHOT event in New Farm Park.

## Next PFLAG Brisbane meeting – Saturday 14 June

The meeting starts at 1.30pm and will be held at the usual place - Queensland Aids Council, 30 Helen Street, Teneriffe, QLD 4005.

The visiting speaker is Robert Muscolino, the HIV project officer at Queensland Aids Council. He will talk to us about his work and the latest on HIV prevention and treatment.

You are very welcome to come and join us.



MAY 2014

## Safe Schools Coalition Australia – YES, it will reach Queensland

The Federal Government has provided funding for Safe Schools Coalition Australia (SSCA).

SSCA is dedicated to making schools safer and more inclusive for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse young people. It will create the necessary change and ensure that every student and every teacher in every school has access to a safe and inclusive learning environment.

A year ago PFLAG Brisbane started an action group "Action against Homo/transphobia in Queensland Schools". A wide range of organisations have joined the group, all of them involved in some way with our schools and young people.

The Queensland action group has met with the SSCA program director, Sally Richardson to learn more about the SSCA program and discuss how it will be delivered in our state. Queensland will come on board during the second quarter of 2015.

The key priorities of the Queensland action group are (1) a Queensland government policy supporting LGBTIQ students in Queensland schools and (2) the implementation of a Safe Schools Coalition in Queensland.

Despite considerable communication with Queensland education department they still do not have a policy in place. In August 2013 a policy did appear on their website but was soon removed after complaints were received.

**We have written to Premier Campbell Newman** asking the Queensland Government to re-publish the policy supporting LGBTIQ students in Queensland schools. The action group also asked the Premier to confirm that the Queensland government will back the delivery of SSCA in Queensland.



## Queensland AIDS Council is 30 years old

The Queensland AIDS Council (QuAC) is an independent community based health promotion charity that is turning 30 this year. Formed in 1984 by a group of predominantly gay men in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Queensland, the organisation grew to deliver HIV prevention programs, client services for people with HIV, peer support through Queensland Positive People and a strong voice on HIV and gay issues.

Today, along with continuing invaluable HIV prevention work, QuAC also tackles wider health issues for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Queenslanders. The work falls under two main program areas:

1. Sexual Health (including the HIV/STI Clinic, Men4Men and 2 Spirits Programs)
2. Healthy Communities (focused on LGBTIQ Health, Mental Health, Ageing, CALD programs, a Gender Clinic in Brisbane and inclusive practice improvement)

QuAC have recently launched a revamped website following a change of name from Healthy Communities back to the Queensland AIDS Council. To find out more, and how to get involved go to: [www.quac.org.au](http://www.quac.org.au)

*Written by Gai Lemon, Director Healthy Communities Program, QuAC*

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MAY 2014

## Your PFLAG . . . . .

### ***Would you like to join the PFLAG Brisbane committee?***

Have you ever attended a PFLAG Brisbane meeting and wanted to say more, do more, help other people more, go to more events or come up with more ideas.

A couple of our lovely committee members, for personal reasons, are not able to put as much into the committee work at the moment as they would like to. We know they will return to full strength in the future and our thoughts are with them always.

In the meantime we would love to hear from you if you feel you have the spare time and the enthusiasm to help us.

Please write to [secretary@pflagbrisbane.org.au](mailto:secretary@pflagbrisbane.org.au)

### ***Halloween Ball***

Unfortunately due to lack of funds we have had to put a hold on the Halloween Ball. But do not fear as we are hoping to hold an event of sorts at some stage in the near future. We will keep you posted!

### ***Share your story***

Have you discovered how helpful it is to talk with someone who has faced the same difficulties as you.

It's also helpful to read about someone else's struggles and how they got through - especially when they relate to your own struggles.

So please would you like to write about your story for your PFLAG newsletter. Just a paragraph or two - and it can be anonymous. You can be certain it will help another PFLAG reader.

Email: [secretary@pflagbrisbane.org.au](mailto:secretary@pflagbrisbane.org.au)

## **The Brisbane Lesbian and Gay Pride Choir**

This is a non-auditioned choir, open to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, intersex, queer and straight people who love to sing. The Choir rehearses every Tuesday evening at the New Farm Library meeting room, 135 Sydney Street, New Farm. The next (Semester 2) intake for new singers begins on Tuesday, 8 July.

Further information about the Choir, including membership, can be found at [www.blgpc.org.au](http://www.blgpc.org.au)

## **Australian Parliament to Hold Inquiry into Recognizing Overseas Gay Marriages**

The Australian Senate's Legal and Constitutional Committee will hold an inquiry on legally recognizing same-sex marriages performed overseas after Greens Senator Sarah Hanson-Young introduced a bill that would recognize them if passed.

Australia already recognizes heterosexual marriages which are legally conducted overseas and the Greens bill seeks to also recognize same-sex marriages performed overseas where they are legal.

MindOUT! Workshops in Mount Isa and Longreach

The workshop is designed for mental health and suicide prevention workers on providing accessible, inclusive, and effective support to LGBTI clients. This workshop will include topics such as: recognising the importance for inclusive services beyond 'treating everyone the same'; what is meant by inclusive practice for LGBTI people; and creating safe, accessible, and inclusive organisations.

If any LGBTI people in these areas are interested in connecting with MindOUT!, please contact Sally Morris on (07) 3017 1777 or [smorris@qahc.org.au](mailto:smorris@qahc.org.au).

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MAY 2014

## PFLAG Brisbane meeting dates

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

## Events for your diary

Safe Schools Coalition Australia – 2014 National Symposium. 13 June in Melbourne  
<https://www.etches.com/ehome/87262>



**Change is coming.**  
Will you be there?

**2014 National Symposium**

Safe Schools Coalition AUS

**Friday 13 June Melbourne**  
[fya.org.au/symposium](http://fya.org.au/symposium)

“The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

## PFLAG Brisbane

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Personal / family membership: \$25/yr