



## PFLAG

**Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays**

'KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER'

PO Box 5266 Dunedin

Telephone: (03) 466 4600 Cell phone 027 6869 304

Email: [gouldint@es.co.nz](mailto:gouldint@es.co.nz)

Website: [www.pflag.org.nz](http://www.pflag.org.nz)

Dear Parent or Friend,

First of all, welcome to the large group of people who love someone who is gay or lesbian, bisexual, transgendered. or takataapui!

If you are reading this, you probably have experience of how painful and confusing these issues can be for families for parents and their gay children, or children with parents who are gay. Coming out is a journey, different for each person, it takes time. Many people will come to accept their gay child and to be proud of who they are.

Those who first find themselves in this situation usually feel very much alone, and yet are afraid to talk about their experience or to find reliable information for fear of what people will say. This is particularly true in small towns and rural areas.

Parents are usually relieved when they find they can share their experiences and the journey with others.

We hope that this pack of information will help parents who may want to begin a group where people can freely talk and know they will be understood and respected in a confidential setting.

### **What you need to begin a group is very simple:**

A notice to tell the community that it's on.

A phone number to ring so that the location doesn't have to be public if this is important...

Reliable Information

One or two parents or friends of family members

A place to meet (can be a living room)

A topic to begin the conversation (or DVD to show and start people talking )

A cup of tea, coffee, biscuits

We are aware that a big folder of information may seem too complicated when you are just beginning, so we will present the information as simply as we can

There is additional information which you may need in a (separate colour? Folder?)

Best Wishes

PFLAG South, Dunedin

Hamilton PFLAG

## **Suggested framework for a meeting:**

**Welcome:** Each person introduces themselves and why they have come to the meeting . Some may wish to say “ I am ..... and I am here because I have a gay son, daughter etc” Some people may not wish to give their full name, or may not wish to speak .

**Confidentiality** An agreement that whatever is said at the meeting stays at the meeting.

**How we are we? (for a group that has met more than once)**Time for sharing how life has been since last meeting , troubles, breakthroughs, support.

### **Getting a discussion started (For a beginning group, start with this)**

Introduce a topic for discussion, a DVD, a book review, or maybe someone telling their personal story of how it was when they came out, or when a family member came out.

Sharing honestly with others can be a wonderful help to everybody present. You never know when something will ‘strike a chord’ with someone else.

**Discussion** around the topic and maybe how it relates to our situation.

**Finish** at agreed time, an hour to an hour and a half should be enough

**Set time for next meeting, (usually a month)**

**Supper (Very important time for informal meeting)**

## **Sample topics to discuss at a PFLAG group meeting**

- **How did you feel when you first found out about your gay family member?**
- **What was the thing that you found hardest to deal with? Was there anything positive?**
- **Have you learned anything now?**
- **How was it with your family members when someone came out? A son or daughter? What happened in the extended family? With friends?**
- **Is it different for Dads to cope with a gay son or daughter? Why? How?**
- **Were there any people you felt you could trust with the your secret? How were they different from other people?**
- **Where do you think we get our ideas about homosexuality? What sort of ideas have you heard about homosexuality? How do we know which are true and which are not true?**
- **Do you think people’s feelings about their gay child might change over the months and years?**
- **Are there challenges that gay students face at school?**

## **RESOURCES FOR COMING OUT**

### **Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgendered Takataapui**

LEAFLETS ...white copies ..... enclosed and available on the website

*When You Think You Might Be Bisexual Lesbian or Gay*

*Coming Out To Your Parents*

*Bisexuality*

*Transgendered*

*Frequently Asked Questions about Homosexuality*

### **USEFUL WEBSITES**

**Rainbow Youth (Auckland)**

<http://www.rainbowyouth.org.nz>

**Gayline, (Wellington)**

<http://gayline.gen.nz>

**Curious website**

News and information about sexuality, gender, coming out, keeping safe. And links to other curious stuff

<http://www.curious.org.nz/>

**Takataapui (NZ Aids Foundation)**

<http://www.nzaf.org.nz>  
[takataapui@nzaf.org.nz](mailto:takataapui@nzaf.org.nz)

## **RESOURCES FOR PARENTS FAMILIES AND FRIENDS of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Takataapui, and Transgendered people**

### LEAFLETS

*When Someone you love is Gay .*

*A Fear that Changes Families.*

*Frequently Asked Questions about Homosexuality*

### USEFUL WEBSITES FOR GLBT PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

#### **PFLAG South, Dunedin**

<http://www.pflag.org.nz>

Links to many other sites with valuable information and parent stories

#### **PFLAG Victoria Australia**

<http://www.pflagvictoria.org.au>

Highly recommended and very useful booklets

**Manchester FFLAG group** (highly recommended) [www.manpg.co.uk](http://www.manpg.co.uk)

**MOVIE OF PARENTS TALKING** [http://www.manpg.co.uk/photos\\_parents\\_talking.htm](http://www.manpg.co.uk/photos_parents_talking.htm)

(Highly recommended)

#### **PFLAG Phoenix, USA**

[www.pflagphoenix.org/resources/1resources.html](http://www.pflagphoenix.org/resources/1resources.html)

Well written information, links, on wide variety of topics

### Reading

*“My Child is Gay”* edited by Bryce McDougall

*Allen and Unwin* ISBN 1 86448 658 9.

A compilation of letters written by parents who have a gay or lesbian child.

Parents talk about how they dealt with their emotions, anger guilt confusion, embarrassment, fear, grief and loss. A helpful book for families also for gay men and women contemplating coming out .

*“Beyond Acceptance”* Parents of Lesbians and gays talk about their experience.

Carolyn Welch Griffin, Marian J. Wirth, Arthur G. Wirth

St. Martins Griffin New York ISBN 0-312-16781-4

Based on the experience of parents, provides parents with comfort and the knowledge they need for the journey through the emotional stages, toward accepting their gay and lesbian children.

*“Invisible Families”* Terry Stuart

*Tandem Press* ISBN 0 908884 75 3

Terry Stewart a NZ mother with a gay son has written a wonderful resource for Parents with lesbian, gay and bisexual children. A good starting point for families to begin talking openly and work towards healing misunderstandings .

*“When Our Children Come Out”* Maria Palotta –Chiarolli

Finch Publishing Company Sydney ISBN 1-876451- 44- 0

A practical and moving guide for all those whose lives are affected when a young person comes out. Gay lesbian bisexual and transgendered young people wrestle, all too often in isolation with the difficulties of being different.

## **BISEXUALITY**

Leaflet *Bisexuality*

### USEFUL WEBSITES

Gayline Wellington

<http://www.gayline.gen.nz/bisexuality.htm>

Bisexual Network in NSW

<http://www.bi-nsw.org.au>

A good leaflet on bisexuality

<http://www.bi-nsw.org.au/brochures/an.pdf>

For bisexual Youth

<http://www.reachout.com.au/default.asp?ti=303>

## **TRANSGENDER**

### LEAFLET

*Growing Up Transgender*

### HELPFUL WEBSITES

**Agender**

<http://www.agender.org.nz>

Support for Transgendered people and their families in NZ

**“I Think I Might be Transgender. Now what do I do?” (online Brochure)**

<http://www.debradavis.org/gecpage/youth.html>

**PFLAG Transgender Network** [http://pflag.org/Getting\\_Support-Coming\\_Out.comingout.0.html](http://pflag.org/Getting_Support-Coming_Out.comingout.0.html)

## **STRAIGHT SPOUSE NETWORK**

Support and information for families where one parent has come out as Gay lesbian bisexual or transgendered. good information for all the family

(There is a place for finding the NZ contact but they have not replied to my request for information)

<http://www.ssnetwk.org/index.shtml>

## **REPARATIVE THERAPY/TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRIES**

( Can gay people be changed by therapies into straight people?)

Key Words that mean the same thing:

Transformational Ministries, Conversion Therapy, Ex Gay, Healing Homosexuals, Re orientation Therapy, Sexual Conversion Therapy.

### HELPFUL WEBSITES

PFLAG USA

<http://community.pflag.org/Page.aspx?pid=503>

## **DVD and VIDEO RESOURCES**

(see PFLAG South library list)

## **RELIGION and HOMOSEXUALITY**

There is a lot of information on this on the PFLAG South website, covering a good range of religions.