

Comments

“As the adult daughter of a lesbian mother who grew up in a rural area, I can attest to the absolute need for gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender parents and their children to have a sense of community.”

-**Meema Spadola, Filmmaker**

“Projects supported by the Lesbian and Gay Family Building Project, such as their conferences on family building and parenting (which I had the pleasure of attending last year), the directory of culturally sensitive health and human service providers, and the Pride and Joy parenting/family groups are excellent examples of the local work that is of vital importance.”

-**Lisa Bennett, Deputy Director for HRC FamilyNet, Human Rights Campaign Foundation**

“What more perfect time to contact you than Thanksgiving---to express my appreciation for your great Family Building Event I attended two years ago. I learned about the possibility of adopting from Cambodia. We are a very happy family now with my partner and two year old and have much to be grateful for.”

-**Jeff, New York City**

“This organization was one of our first contacts when we moved into western New York State several months ago. It has enabled us to network and connect with other gay/lesbian parented families, providing a supportive and nurturing social environment for our three children and us.”

-**Patricia and Jessica, Canisteo, NY**

“Through this project, our family has been able to network with others, attend and support local events, and participate in activities with a loving, supportive community.”

-**Michelle and Sheila, Binghamton, NY**

LESBIAN AND GAY FAMILY BUILDING PROJECT *Ferre Institute, Inc*



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LESBIAN AND GAY FAMILY BUILDING PROJECT



*Dedicated to helping LGBT people
build and strengthen their families.*

Who We Are

The Lesbian and Gay Family Building Project is dedicated to helping lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in upstate New York build and strengthen their families. We offer educational programs, information and referral services, the Directory of Family Building Services, and support groups for LGBT parents and prospective parents. Our network of Pride and Joy Families support groups provides social and educational activities and a sense of community to LGBT parents and their children.

A Bit of History

The Lesbian and Gay Family Building Project was started in 2000 with a grant from New York State to the Ferre Institute, Inc. Ferre is a 501(C)(3) organization that provides infertility education, family building resources and genetic counseling.

Past accomplishments of the Project include an upstate conference in 2001 on family building and parenting, which attracted 150 people; the 2001-2002 Directory of Family Building Services for LGB People, which lists welcoming health and human service providers; and the creation of Pride and Joy Families groups in Binghamton and Elmira/Corning, NY.

In the spring of 2004, the Project brought Filmmaker Meema Spadola and her award winning film *Our House; a very real documentary about kids of gay and lesbian parents* to audiences across NY State. A total of 220 people attended the screenings and subsequent discussions about LGBT parenting in Corning, Rochester, Syracuse and Binghamton, NY.

The Need

An unprecedented number of “out” lesbians and gay men across the country are choosing to become parents. They face special challenges in their efforts to plan and sustain their families, including access to culturally sensitive medical, legal and other providers, and a lack of recognition and support of their unique family structures by the larger community.

In addition, children with LGBT parents face “coming out” issues in their schools and friendship groups. Parents need resources and information to help their kids navigate in a world that may discount or disparage their families. But information alone is not enough, parents and their children also benefit from being part of a supportive community of families like theirs.

Current Programs

Directory of Family Building Services for LGBT People, 2004-2005

The updated Directory includes listings of LGBT-welcoming providers in the following categories: Adoption, Attorneys and Mediators, Community Resources, Genetic Counselors, Faith Communities, Financial Advisors, Medical Providers, Sperm Banks, Surrogacy, Therapists and Counselors, and Travel and Camps. The complete document is available at our website: www.PrideAndJoyFamilies.org.

Pride and Joy Families Support Groups

The network of Pride and Joy Families groups now extends to four areas of upstate NY. Each group holds gatherings such as picnics, pool parties and pot luck suppers, and hosts a listserv for online discussions of family building and parenting issues and for announcing group events. New members, including LGBTs who are considering parenthood, are always welcome!

- ◆ **Pride and Joy Families**
The Binghamton group began in October 2000 with a meeting of several gay and lesbian parents and their kids. The group gathers approximately monthly and hosts a listserv for area families. New members, including prospective parents, are always welcome!
- ◆ **Pride and Joy West**
The Elmira/Corning group holds events and hosts a listserv for area families for on-line discussions of parenting and family building issues and to plan group activities. Began meeting in September 2002. New members, including those considering parenthood, are always welcome!
- ◆ **Pride and Joy Families of Rochester**
Meets at the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley (GAGV) Community Center, which cosponsors the group, and hosts a listserv for area families. Began meeting in January 2004. New members, including those considering parenthood, are always welcome!
- ◆ **Pride and Joy Families of Syracuse**
Gathers for events and hosts a listserv. Began meeting in February 2004. New members, including those considering parenthood, are always welcome!