

1990 GLPCI Conference Recap

Hi, my name is Emily, and some of you know me from the last GLPCI youth conference held in Washington, D.C. this past June 1, 2, 3. I'm here to introduce myself to anyone who missed the conference and to tell you a little bit about the plans we made there.

The conference was a great success. There were about thirty sons and daughters there over the age of thirteen, and all of us got to know each other and share our stories about our families. Over the course of the weekend, we made some very exciting plans that will help us all to help each other. Here are a few of them:

- a steering committee, elected by the conference participants to organize next year's conference and continue to publish JUST FOR US
- safe addresses and names of support groups and persons for publication. These addresses appear later in this newsletter. They are people who have agreed to have their full names and addresses published, so that if you, as a child of a gay or lesbian, need to reach someone for support, you do not have to be alone
- various ideas for workshop topics at next year's conference. There will be more opportunities to discuss unique problems and situations, and more choices. In addition, a larger age range will be taken into account.
- possibility for organizing sons' and daughters' stories into a book for publication.
- names for our own organization, which would fall under the GLPCI umbrella and yet would be able to stand on its own.

These are just a few of the ideas that were brought up at the conference. You will see more of them in the pages to come. I hope to see you at next year's conference!

The Anchor

Here they are: the addresses you can write to for support. The phone numbers are not printed, but when you send your letter, you will be contacted. Your letters and calls will be kept strictly confidential. Please write to the person in your region, as this will ensure a fast response. This service is for all of us, so we can help each other.

Eastern Time Zone Region

Molly Heller
214 Oakwood Dr.
Windham, CT 06280

Hope Berry
754 Seventh Street S.E.
Washington, DC 20003

Central Time Zone Region

Emily Gmerek
912 Hamlin Street #2
Evanston, IL 60201

Donna Ippolito
7710 Hollybrook Ln
Indianapolis, IN 46227

Mountain Time Zone Region

Meghan Waterman
476 Clayton Street
Denver, CO 80206

Pacific Time Zone Region

Ali Dubin
8830 Noble Ave.
Sepulveda, CA 91343

To Receive JUST FOR US

If you would like to receive JUST FOR US, fill out the form below and mail to: JUST FOR US, c/o Ali Dubin, 8830 Noble Ave., Sepulveda, CA 91343

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

1990 Steering Committee

Donna Ippolito: This past June, my mother, her lover, and myself attended our first GLPCI conference. I was excited about going, but anxious about the unknown three days ahead of me. I was pleasantly surprised. I met a great group of people of all ages who all share one BIG secret. It was great to be ourselves and talk about our parents and our lives. I was afraid that, because of my age, I would not have anything in common with anyone, but again, I was pleasantly surprised. In fact, going to the conference was the best thing I have done for myself in a long time. In those short days I became dedicated to the National GLPCI Conference and to the growth and expansion of the youth conference. I was elected to be the contact person for the Midwestern section. It is important for me to let all of you know that I am here to offer some help. We need to stick together and help each other. We are the only experts on the subject of children of gay and lesbian parents. We have our very own struggles just like our parents do. We all have our own stories. I am currently running a group in Indianapolis for children of gays and lesbians. I hope to let all of you know that you are not alone and have somewhere to turn. WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.

Emily Gmerek: I am 21 years old and I wrote a little about the conference at the beginning of this newsletter. As far as JUST FOR US is concerned, we hope to publish more newsletters per year, and create more of a network of communication among all of us. The conference helped to begin that network, and those of us on the committee are committed to seeing it grow. This issue, as some of you may know, is not like the two that preceded it. However, JUST FOR US will continue to publish the individual stories of all of us. In addition, we will keep the network open and inform you of upcoming events and issues of interest. I'm very proud to be a part of the steering committee and am excited and anxious to meet the new people at next year's conference and welcome you to a truly wonderful experience.

Meghan Waterman: This was my second GLPCI youth conference, and I enjoyed it very much. Unfortunately, I did not get to meet everyone and hear everyone's story, because I arrived late. I do think we had a productive year, electing a new

steering committee, letting go and starting our youth conference! It's the best feeling when you meet a group of kids and everyone knows you, no matter if you've met before or not. That's because we don't have to lie to anyone, we can be so honest with ourselves and everyone around us there because everyone there has the exact same problem. I've never seen or experienced so much love between a group of kids before in my life! I hope to see you all there!

Molly Heller: I opened the door to room 1811 and immediately felt a strong connection between myself and everyone in the room. As I told my story I introduced myself and shared my life as a child of a lesbian mother. I looked at each person and noticed how attentive each person was as I continued to talk. This made me feel a strong sense of support. The day was long and there were many tears shed. Many were learning they are not the only one's with gay fathers or lesbian mothers. Room 1811 was a safe place where everyone was given the opportunity to open up to others as much as they felt they needed to. As Saturday rolled around I felt as though people were feeling more comfortable around one another, and the focus was not so much on our individual lives, but issues about having a gay father or lesbian mother. Saturday evening was filled with wonderful entertainment and a dance which filled the ballroom with uplifting energy. I ran around clicking my camera trying to get as many pictures as I could to save the memories of everyone who was able to share this intimate weekend with me. The first day we were many faces with one thing in common, as the hours passed, we were a small community of friends. I hope everyone enjoyed the conference as much as I did! Thank you everyone, you are all very special people.

Hope Berry: In Washington, D.C., on October 20, the Gay Fathers of DC set up the much needed support group for their children. The local chapter of "Just For Us" got together to express their feelings and concerns about having a gay dad. The meeting lasted about an hour and a half. Everyone had a chance to talk and get to know each other. At the end of the meeting everyone agreed it was a good idea and looked forward to meeting again in November.

1990 Steering Committee

Ali Dubin: Hi! I'm the regional editor of JUST FOR US, from Colorado to the West Coast. I am also one of six spectacular people who are putting the youth conference together for GLPCI in Houston, Texas next year. If you live anywhere from the West Coast to Colorado, write to me and give me your suggestions for the conference next year. Also don't forget to send me your poems, stories, artwork, letters, and nonsense for JFU. This newsletter is for, about, and by you, and if we don't hear from you then it is really skimpy and I can only write so much. (smile) Also, my address is listed in this newsletter as a contact. Feel free to write for any reason!

Donna's Story

I am 24 years old, and I currently live with my mother, who is a lesbian. I haven't always lived with my mother. When I was six, my parents got divorced and my father got custody of me because of my mother's lifestyle. After some emotional hardships and after all those who had bad mouthed my mother turned their backs on me, my mother was still there willing to take me in and start to build a new relationship. I have been back home for over five years now. We have built a normal relationship together. It frustrates me that the courts took me away from my mother because of her lifestyle. I know that I can't change the past, but I can try to educate society's attitudes in the present, and offer my friendship to all of you. (Donna Ippolito is a member of the 1990 Steering Committee and is the Regional Contact for the Central Time Zone Region.)

Some Support Groups in Your Area

These are just a few of the groups for children of gay parents. For more information about these or other groups in your area or start your own group, contact Hope or Ali.

Some Parents Aren't Straight

Contact: ALI DUBIN
8830 Noble Ave.
Sepulveda, CA 91343
Meeting Location: Hollywood, CA

Our Parents Aren't Straight

Contact: DONNA IPPOLITO
7710 Hollybrook Ln.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
Meeting Location: Indianapolis, IN

MIA

When I tell people that my Dad's gay, one of the first things they ask is, "How was I born?" So I tell them, "My parents got together and made me, How were you born?" I get a kick out of the shocked looks and expressions, they're priceless. But I know some people don't accept it and some parents won't let their kids be close to me, as they call me "a gay's kid." Like it's a bad thing or something. My Dads are just as out of it as any straight father. They listen to new music, they wear boring clothes, but so do my friends straight fathers. As far as I can see, the only difference between my Dads or friends Dads is my father sleeps in the same bed as my stepfather.

Some people tell me I'm smart, but I don't understand why people can't accept my father as a decent guy. That, and I want to know why football players smack each other on the butt.

The Name Game

In forming our own organization, we are trying to find a name to call ourselves. At the conference we came up with some ideas and are looking to our readers for more. Here are some of the names that were suggested:

- O.P.A.S. - Our Parents Aren't Straight, the name of the group founded in Indianapolis by Donna Ippolito.
- S.P.A.S. - Some Parents Aren't Straight, the name of Ali Dubin's group
- K.W.G.P. - Kids With Gay Parents
- K.O.L.A.K.O.G. - Kids of Lesbians and Kids of Gays
- T.R.U.S.T. - Teens Relating Unique Situations Together

If you have any ideas of your own, please write to JUST FOR US. Use Ali Dubin's address.

Kids Of Gay Parents

Contact: HOPE BERRY
754 Seventh Street SE
Washington, DC 20003
Meeting Location: Washington, DC

Topics for '91 Youth Conference

Some of the topics we will have workshops on at the 1991 Youth Conference:

AIDS Our Sexuality
My Gay Dad My Lesbian Mom
Religion Telling/Not Telling My Friends
How Does All This Make Me Feel?

There are more topics being covered that we'll tell you about later, but we are having two topics per timeslot, so you will be able to choose what you want to be involved with.

There will be a box provided throughout the conference for questions you may have and don't want anyone else to know about. Everyday, we will empty the box and answer all the questions!

Write to Just For Us

If you would like to tell your story to JUST FOR US, you can use the addresses of the members of the steering committee. Just send your story to the person in your region (ex. Donna Ippolito for the Central Region). As always, you do not have to include your last name, and your address will be kept confidential. If you would like to simply write a letter to us, you can mail it to JUST FOR US, c/o Ali Dubin and include the address listed for her later in this newsletter. Poems, artwork, and related news stories or special interest stories are also welcome and should be sent to the regional contacts. We hope to hear from you!

JUST FOR US

PO Box 50360

Washington, DC 20091 USA

Address Correction Requested