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Are you interested in becoming more involved with COLAGE, but aren't sure how to do it? Give us a call today and we'll be happy to talk with you about the many volunteer opportunities.

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A PUBLICATION OF COLAGE (CHILDREN OF LESBIANS AND GAYS EVERYWHERE)

COLAGE JUST FOR US

FALL 2000

FOR THE DAUGHTERS AND SONS OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER PARENTS

TRAILBLAZING AT SCHOOL

By Rosanne Johnson

Across the country students are forming Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs). Most of us have faced or witnessed homophobia and gender stereotyping in school. Homophobia in schools attacks our families and in some cases our own sexual orientation and gender identity. Students with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) parents from Seattle, WA to Brighton, NY are rising up, speaking out, and taking action!

Just For Us interviewed four high school GSA organizers with LGBT parents and Carolyn Laub, Founder and Executive Director of the Gay-Straight Alliance Network told us about GSAs, student activism, and the lead that many children of LGBT parents are taking in schools to fight homophobia.

WHAT IS A GSA?

A GSA is a student-run club, typically in a high school, which provides a safe place for students to meet, support each other, talk about issues related to sexual orientation, and work to end homophobia.

Some GSAs work on educating themselves and the broader school community about sexual orientation and gender identity issues. They may bring in outside speakers to cover a particular topic such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) history. They may organize a "Pride Week" or "LGBTQ Awareness Events" and offer a series of educational workshops, panels, and pride celebrations.

Like other school clubs, GSAs attract students who share common interests and goals. What sets GSAs apart from other campus clubs is their unique mission: to fight homophobia in their own schools. GSAs are changing school environments, making LGBT issues more visible to school communities, and creating a way for

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Ashley Harness, 16, founded a GSA at her high school in St. Paul, Minnesota.

REFLECTIONS ON FAMILY WEEKS 2000

A week in the life of Jamie Bergeron, 15, Courtland, NY



First Annual Saugatuck, Michigan Family Week

I had been to Provincetown before, and loved it, but I had never been to Family Week, and was a little apprehensive. I had never had an opportunity to be with other teens of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender parents and I really had no idea what to expect. I was worried, though, that I would be put in situations that would make me uncomfortable. Boy was I wrong!

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

WHY SHOULD WE PAY ATTENTION TO THE ELECTION?

We are in the midst of a Presidential election. One that, at first glance, seems, well, a little boring and unimportant. It is hard to tell how either of these guys, or the presidency for that matter, really affects our day-to-day lives at this point. And, after the last four years, with more focus on the President's pants than his policies, I personally am a little bit wary of giving much of my precious time or attention to matters involving the Executive Office.

After all, my life is built around my two families: my COLAGE family and my home family. I spend my life working to promote a society and to live a life centered around love. Some people find it hard to believe, but here at the COLAGE office we still receive calls or emails all the time from people who literally thought they were the only one in the world with a lesbian, gay, bi, or transgender (lgbt) parent. Many of us still live in tremendous isolation.

At COLAGE, our amazing staff and volunteers dedicate our time and resources to getting our stories into the public forum so others can see themselves and their families reflected. We make our voices heard in every state, in order to improve the fragile survival issues our families face every day. We work hard to build bridges between members of our own community and the "outside" world so that kids with LGBT parents can grow up to be proud, strong, and vibrant. We believe in a world where freedom of expression of love and family is a given. That is the world we are working toward everyday.

With a focus like that, is it any surprise that the political discussions of this election seem

distant? I don't hear any of the candidates talking about my daily struggles on behalf of LGBT families.

However, part of my job as the director of COLAGE is to look farther down the path, to examine the political, social, and cultural trends of the US and the world to see how they will impact the constituents of COLAGE. Today we are poised at a critical juncture. I am convinced that this election will have a huge impact on which direction society takes.

On the one hand, things seem worse than ever: same-sex, unmarried parent, and second-parent adoptions are under vicious attack in multiple states across the nation. The Family Research Council and their ilk are busy filling the airwaves with "studies" claiming that gay parents are destroying the lives of their children. Homophobic and transphobic hate crimes are increasing, causing the anxiety level of the whole community to rise as we worry about who will be next. The Supreme Court continues to make decisions like the recent one on the Boy Scouts, which links homosexuality with pedophilia, immorality, and dishonor.

On the other hand, we see vast leaps forward for our families and for the rights of the communities we bridge. Vermont invented Civil Unions, a brilliant new inclusive alternative to the traditional structure of marriage. For me, perhaps the most exciting outcome of this new law: both same-sex parents are legally recognized from the point of birth or adoption without having to go through any additional hoops or expensive legal processes. The documentary *Our House: A*

Very Real Documentary about Kids of Lesbian and Gay Parents, aired nationwide on PBS this summer without protests or backlash, and was seen in homes from Florida to Oregon. At the Millennium March on Washington in April, 2000 families assembled at the Family Garden for the largest LGBT family gathering in history.

I believe that our families will continue to push forward as well as be pulled back by people who are afraid of the changes our families represent. I also feel that the next President (and all elected officials for that matter) will have a tremendous impact on us during these rapidly changing times. These elected officials implement policies, influence court decisions, and make public statements that directly affect our families on the schoolyard, in the courtroom, and around our kitchen tables. We have a lot at stake this November.

So please take a hard look at this year's candidates and decide which candidate is best suited to serve your family. And while you're at it, write letters to your editor about your family and why you intend to vote. Walk your parents over to the polling place on election day to cast their vote, even if it's raining or snowing. Take action in November towards moving our society's focus to the quality of our families' love and away from obsessing about the gender of who we love.

Be Proud! Be Strong! Vote!

Felicia Park-Rogers, Director

COLAGE

(Children Of Lesbians And Gays Everywhere) is a nonprofit organization providing support, education, and advocacy for people of all ages of LGBT parents.

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Dear Michelle,

You are certainly not alone in your feelings. In fact, COLAGE was originally founded as "Just For Us" – a support group so we could share among ourselves the more difficult aspects of having LGBT parents. Many of us have or feel some discomfort with our parents' sexual orientation.

There's no reason why any person should have to walk through life without being able to relate to someone else. This is why COLAGE works hard to create community. COLAGE members are all different ages, live all over the world, come from a wide variety of families, and have varying experiences and perspectives – so it's often not easy to capture everybody's point of view in a single group session, newsletter, or online discussion. COLAGE supports real and diverse representations

LETTERS TO COLAGE



Dear COLAGE,

Every once and a while I go to check out your web site. Today I read some of the letters in your newsletter. All of what I read came from kids who openly accepted their LGBT parents. I know you guys have the best intentions with your newsletter, but I hope in the future you pick letters with different opinions. It has taken me many years to come to terms with my father's sexuality, and it is still hard for me to deal with. I do not condone that lifestyle, however my dad knows I still love him for the man he is. I used to be embarrassed that my dad was gay. Then I would just get depressed because I would see kids on TV or read articles in magazines about how these kids are just happy and wonderful about their parents lifestyle. I felt completely alone because I truly thought I was the only one in the world who was upset about what had happened. I never saw anyone in the media show the side of the story where the children felt hurt and couldn't accept or understand what had happened. I wish I would have found just one person

that felt the way I did. The fact that I couldn't find anyone who had felt or been through what I was feeling made me feel even more alienated. I felt even weirder about the whole situation, because I thought I was the only one who had ever been upset and not understanding about what had taken place.

Today I am almost 19 and much more comfortable with the way things are. My dad and I talk about our boyfriends and I can accept who he is, even though I don't agree with the way he lives his life. I wish there could have just been one person out there telling me they understand. So I hope when you receive this letter you think about that. Maybe there aren't many kids writing you about it and that is why you don't post it. However if there are more kids out there feeling the way I did, I urge you to post it. You will help benefit those who need it the most. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Michelle, Rockford, MI

of our families and strives to create space for all people with LGBT parents to share personal experiences. We are sorry that you have felt alone and have not found the support you need through COLAGE, the media or other resources. Realistic – that is, including the good, the bad and the ugly – discussion of life with an LGBT parent is out there, though you have to look. We recommend:

- The new book *Out of the Ordinary: Essays on Growing Up with Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Parents*. Edited by Noelle Howey and Ellen Samuels. Preface by Dan Savage. Foreword by Margarethe Cammermeyer. \$13.95. Paperback. St. Martin's Press (July, 2000).

- The video *Our House: a Very Real Documentary about Kids of Gay and Lesbian Parents*. Meema Spadola, Director/Producer.

A Sugar Pictures Production. For a video cassette, contact The Cinema Guild at (800) 723-5522; TheCinemaG@aol.com; or www.cinematguild.com. Also check out the *Our House* section on the COLAGE website for more information.

- The COLAGE e-mail discussion lists: 14 and up: http://www.colage.org/email_lists/kog14/sub_form.html (ages 14 and up) and http://www.colage.org/email_lists/kog/sub_form.html (ages 14 and under).

We're so glad you wrote to us and we hope others will too. It is through kids with LGBT parents like yourself speaking out about how you feel and what you need that COLAGE can best meet the needs of its members.

–Editor

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

What COLAGERS around the world are doing to make the world a better place by doing what they do best - being themselves!



Olympia, WA area COLAGERS and PFLAGs know musician **SCOTT ASKEW**, 30, from his work with high-school and college age kids and parents. Lately, Scott's work as a musician has been keeping him very busy. In addition to his full-time job as the Production Director at radio station KGY, he's the drummer for the local band Sammy Stubble and the Little Shavers, and he sings, plays guitar, drums and keyboard on his new solo CD, "So It Happens". Scott can be heard from 9am-2 pm on KGY 1240/96.9. For CD info, e-mail him at skewed1@hotmail.com.



San Francisco Performing Artist **LISI DE HAAS** teaches theater to children and adults and works as an expressive arts consultant. Recently, Lisi wrote, produced and acted in *Study*, a one-woman play about her relationship to her gay dad, musical theater, and her own queer identity. *Study* premiered at Luna Sea theater last April and will be produced again in 2001. Lisi is also in a documentary film, *A Boy Named Sue*, which was featured at the San Francisco International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival this past June. This film chronicles Lisi's former partner's transition from female to male, their changing relationship, and Lisi's response to the transition. Check out Lisi's company, *Mighty Real Arts*, at www.mightyreal.net.



On Monday, May 15, **HEATHER MULHOLLAND** of Surrey, British Columbia was part of a record breaking performance! Heather, an elementary school student, was one of 6532 musicians who came together in BC Stadium to play "Ten Minutes of Nine" (Beethoven's 9th Symphony). New world records were set for the most musicians playing together, for the longest time. Heather is 12 years old and plays the flute. She says the event was a lot of fun and she got to miss a whole day of school. Congratulations, Heather!

So what are you doing? Just for Us wants to hear about it! Write, call or e-mail justforus@colage.org about your adventures. Big or small, personal or political, all of us have something special to contribute! Contact COLAGE or email JFU@colage.org

ALICIA BAKER's, (16, Vienna, VA) letter to the editor was published in the March 14, 2000 issue of *The Advocate Magazine* expressing her feelings about the proposed "Dr. Laura" television show!

I am the daughter of two lesbians, and I may be only 15, but I know Dr. Laura is wrong. She says about gay parenting: "You're just going to stand by and let this happen... Don't you care about the children?" Um, yeah, I'm gonna let this happen. I feel I have gained more from my two moms than I would have from a mom and a dad. I have many friends who have gay parents and have turned out perfectly. Dr. Laura doesn't know what she is talking about. According to her we've been "robbed of a father or mother on purpose." We weren't robbed. We are fortunate to have the understanding perspective that we do. I cannot respect someone who promotes bigotry and hatred toward families that should be accepted as equals. Families like mine.

Congratulations and hi-fives go to Alicia who recently received her church's first-ever Social Justice Youth Service Award for her dedicated activism, including advocacy for the rights of breast-feeding moms and lots of excellent and important work on behalf of COLAGE. Way to go Alicia!

Trailblazing at School *continued from page 1*

students take on leadership roles while working with peer and adults. The concept is catching on quickly. As of the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year, there are approximately 700 GSAs in U.S. schools.

COLAGERS TAKING THE LEAD

"I often think that kids with LGBT parents are like GSAs within ourselves," says Ashley Harness, 16, who founded a GSA at her high school in St. Paul, Minnesota last year. In schools that don't support our families, COLAGERS sometimes feel different, invisible, disrespected, or underrepresented. Like Ashley, many kids with LGBT family members have found GSAs to be an excellent opportunity for self-expression, finding support, sharing their knowledge and working for change. Because the emphasis is on ending homophobia, and not on sexual orientation or gender identity, participation is open to all. Ashley stated it this way: "I live in a world that is predominantly straight, but at home, I'm in a different world. A GSA starts to combine the two worlds. It makes life at school a whole lot easier."

Some students who are not out in school about having a LGBT family long for a safe space in school where they can truly be themselves. "I spend a good part of my life in the gay community, and it shapes my views. Having to censor myself, or hide, gets in the way of learning," says Ashley. The presence of a GSA on campus, raising awareness of the needs of LGBTQ students and straight allies, can help create that kind of space. Most GSAs also act as a peer support group for youth dealing with issues of their own sexual orientation and gender identity and many are now working on LGBT family issues. Evan Kuluk, 17, a 2000 graduate, helped start and run the GLEA (Gay & Lesbian Education and Affirmation) Club at his Catholic high school in Oakland, CA. His school even offered to provide confidential counseling with an independent counselor. Whether it's structured or casual, GSAs can provide COLAGERS the freedom to explore issues and feelings that they're not comfortable discussing anywhere else.



Evan Kuluk, 17

Some of us often feel like "ambassadors" between the LGBT and straight communities which places us in a unique position to advocate for our families. Kate Fortmueller, 17, co-founded GLOW (Gay, Lesbian, or Whatever!) at her high school in Washington. Kate told us that speaking out and taking action has given her a feeling of power and freedom she never had before: "I feel so much more comfortable and self-assured... If I had known other people with LGBT parents in junior high, my experience would have been much different."

WHAT GSAS DO

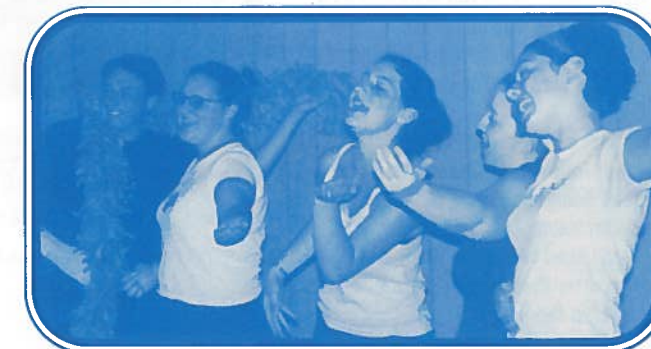
Reflecting the diverse strengths of their members, GSA activities and events are creative, intelligent, compassionate, and powerful. Some examples:

- **Pride Celebrations:** GSA members bring major queer pride activities and celebrations, such as National Coming Out Day, to their campuses. Some schools have their own "Awareness Week" or "Rainbow Week", or other celebrations of diversity.

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Family Week *continued from page 1*

On my second day in Provincetown, there was a breakfast gathering in a nearby park for all the teens and their parents. It was very awkward for me because, many of the other teens had met each other in previous years, and I felt a little out of place at first. After the hand shaking, and exchanging of names, all of the teens sat down for some games. These games were "meet your neighbor" type games, and they were really good icebreakers! From that point on, I felt COMPLETELY comfortable talking about my family and my girlfriend for the first time in my life. It was such an amazing experience. As the week went on, I became closer to these 10 people than I am with some of the people that I have known since kindergarten. I was completely comfortable with these people that I had just met. I had nothing to hide. No topic was "off limits".



Teens at P-town talent show

The workshops (such as religion, confronting friends, and 2nd generation) really helped me to feel "normal" for a week. They helped me to understand, that by hiding my family, I was acting as if I was ashamed, and I wasn't. They gave me the courage to be honest with friends. Family week was the absolute best experience I have ever had. It has changed my life.

When I returned home, it was a rude

awakening. I came home confident, and ready to express my thoughts and feelings to anyone that would listen. I was ready to finally come out about my family, even if I was not ready to come out about myself. A few days went by, and I realized, that even though I had changed, the world hadn't. I would have to



Jamie

go on living in the world of ignorance, rather than the world I wish for. My experience at Family Week was amazing, and I wouldn't trade it in for anything, I just wish Family Week could be every week! ♦♦♦

MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

By Sarah Larkin

Lately I find that most of my time is immersed in preparing for one exciting media event or another. However, this was not always the case. In June of 1999 I accepted an invitation to be a guest on the "Leeza Show". With only a day between the initial invitation and the actual taping of the show, there simply wasn't any time to worry. The producers very patiently prepared me for possible questions that might have arisen on the show. While on the show, I enjoyed sharing my experiences as a daughter of a gay man. Appearing on the "Leeza Show" sparked my interest in continuing to share my life in the media spotlight. I have now turned into a media fiend. The positive feedback that I received from my friends, family, teachers, and even strangers further encouraged that light inside of me to turn on. I no longer worry about being different, nor do I worry who knows that I have two dads and a mom. I am very proud of my family and I appreciate any opportunity that enables me to empower others to see they are not alone. I have taken it upon myself to show the world that COLAGErs not only turn out fabulous, but that we are lucky to grow up in such a free and loving environment.

There are many other hooks out there in the big media sea. If anything, it's the subject that chooses the reporter, not the other way around. Before a reporter even begins their interview, I ask them questions. Before committing myself to a story, I make sure that my family and I will be portrayed in a positive, loving way. I will NOT participate in any story in which I am not comfortable with either the reporter's questions or the show or magazine that is featuring the story. I have, in many cases, questioned my friends and family regarding the integrity of a reporter. If there is any doubt, I will refuse a story. For example, I have had to politely deny an invitation of an article. During the initial set of questions, the reporter presented questions such as, "Were you molested as a child?" I felt this question to be both inappropriate as well as offensive. In this particular case I politely informed the reporter that her questions offended me and I told her I thought it would be better for the both of us if she found another person for the story.

Often times I forget a very important aspect of the media, unpredictability. In one particular case, my dad and I were interviewed for a Father's Day article in *In Magazine*. The interview lasted for a good hour, and during that time my father and I very sweetly shared our love for each other, and amidst that, an occasional memory arose. I mentioned that I liked to shop with my dad because he has a great sense of fashion. Then after that brief sidetrack, we continued to share how deeply each had impacted the other's life. Well, when the article came out, there was an adorable picture of us, and the bold headline, "I love my shopping dad!". That's it. So, I quickly learned to be prepared for writers to take a different angle than originally planned. The article turned out just fine, though very different than both my father and I expected.

Although sometimes being different is portrayed as bad, different is never bad, it's just different. The media introduced me to a side of myself that never rose to the surface. I want other kids to experience the freedom that I've discovered. We children of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender parents are so truly blessed, and now it's time for us to take the world by storm and share our tremendous love. ❖❖

Don't miss Sarah Larkin, 17, in October's issue of *COSMOGIRL!* She and her dad, Dean, are featured in an article about amazing girls who come from "different" families.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

FIVE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED WITH PUBLIC SPEAKING AND THE MEDIA

COLAGE works very closely with national and community based television, magazines, newspapers, and radio and has trained hundreds of COLAGErs of all ages on media and public speaking work. Here's how to get involved and make our lives visible:

1. CONTACT COLAGE. COLAGE connects families, youth, and adult children of LGBTQ parents with the media everyday. Want to find out how to get involved? Contact COLAGE for media and public speaking, training, and opportunities. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

2. JOIN A COLAGE CHAPTER. Find out if there's a COLAGE chapter in your community, contact the coordinator, and go to a meeting. Is the group involved with media or public speaking work? Ask how to participate.

3. JOIN OTHER SPEAKERS BUREAUS. Seek out which social justice, LGBTQ groups, and school Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) have speakers' bureaus. Learn about their work and talk with the speakers to hear about their speaking experiences. Share the new perspectives you will bring to the group.

4. SUBSCRIBE TO COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS & EMAIL LISTSERVES. What's going on in your community? Staying informed on current events and activities is a great way to up to date on activist opportunities. Ask COLAGE, family, friends, LGBTQ bookstores, centers, & businesses for subscription ideas!

5. TALK WITH THE MEDIA & EXPERIENCED PUBLIC SPEAKERS. When you go to an event, read an article, hear a radio show, or watch a TV program that focuses on an issue you want to speak out about, contact the source and find how to get involved. Connecting with media directly, others who are covering issues that are interesting to you, and those who have speaking experience can help you to become an activist in speaking and media work.



FILM REVIEW

Reviewed by Abigail Garner with members of the Twin Cities Chapter

Directed By Debra Chasnoff;
A Women's Educational Media Production



Aimed at elementary school children, *That's a Family* features many different kinds of families, each of whom are introduced from the perspective of the children. The film is bright and upbeat with something of a "Sesame Street" feel to it. It is diverse in many ways, including different ethnicities, differently-abled family members, and various socio-economic levels.

This film is not just about GLBT families. It also includes interracial



families, adopted children, kids raised by grandparents, children with divorce parents, and single parent families. The children talk about their families in matter-of-fact styles. We see families doing things like playing games, going to the laundry mat, baking a cake, and going bowling.

There are three gay or lesbian parent households featured. Two are lesbian couples who became parents through donor insemination. The third is a single gay dad and daughter who later moved in with the dad's partner. As our chapter discussed the film, there was a consensus that education about GLBT families in the film could have

been more thorough if it had included parents who came out after a heterosexual marriage. Additionally, we would have liked to have seen a child in a joint custody situation where both parents were of the same sex. Of course, no film can be everything to everyone. We acknowledge that perhaps the kinds of families that were absent from the film were left out due to the extra layer of complexities that perhaps are not age appropriate for the age of the

target audience. The film covers a lot of issues in 35 minutes that fly by. *That's a Family* not only validates diversity, but also makes it fun.

In the film, a boy who has lesbian parents talks about a classmate who teases him about his family. He says, "I wish [my classmate] knew that it's OK to be different." Let's hope that's what a lot of kids learn after seeing this film. ❖❖



That's a Family: A film for kids about family diversity premiered this summer in San Francisco, CA. For upcoming screenings in your area or to purchase a video cassette, visit www.womedia.org or contact Women's Educational Media at 415-641-4616; wemfilms@womedia.org; or 2180 Bryant St. Suite 203 San Francisco, CA 94110.

Abigail Garner coordinates COLAGE Twin Cities, a predominantly social and activist group with members who are seventh grade through adults. Abigail's website for kids of GLBT parents is www.familieslikemine.com.



MAGICAL & FUN FAMILY WEEKS!



Jay at the first ever 13 and up all day activity.

A record setting 1400 people gathered for the COLAGE and Family Pride Coalition sponsored Family Weeks in Provincetown, Massachusetts and Saugatuck, Michigan! The 5th annual Family Week in Provincetown drew approximately 400 families with more than 1200 people in attendance. Over 70 events were held July 29 through August 4. Families attended from 28 states, the District of Columbia, Canada and Scotland.

The 1st annual Family Week in Saugatuck, MI attracted 50 families with over 170 individuals, a wonderful turn out for the first ever Family Week in the Midwest! Families attended from about 10 states including Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, New York, and California.

COLAGE ran over 40 workshops and activities for children ages 5-adult during Family Weeks combined. Social events, beach games and campfires for teens, family fun fairs, a dinner/dance for all ages, pool

parties and teen video nights. Workshop sessions for kids (age 9 through 12, and 13 and older) discussed how to deal with a parent's coming out, homophobia at school, spirituality, and "second generation" issues for LGBT and questioning youth. Teens participated in a media training, a speak-out teen panel for adults, and an activism workshop on how to start a COLAGE chapter and become a political activist back home.

"Family Week is very special for COLAGE youth," said Jude Koski, Program Coordinator at COLAGE. "It is an empowering, warm, and exciting experience

for hundreds of children of all ages in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender families. Each COLAGE participant takes home a deep sense of support and understanding from their peers, and powerful lifetime connections to a national community of others in families similar to their own."

Next year's Family Week in Provincetown will be held from Saturday, August 4 through Friday, August 10, 2001. Those planning to attend are encouraged to make reservations for accommodations early. The second annual Family Week

in Saugatuck, MI will be held July 14 through 20, 2001. For more details on these events, contact Jude at COLAGE.

"Hope to see you, don't miss out next summer!" ❖❖



Joanna takes a break from pool sports.



Buddies Lily and Alex at the playground.



William cools off during teen swim!



Rob and his friends sang and hung out at the teen beach campfire!



Tiffany and her friends chilled out in P-town.



Family Week, Provincetown, Massachusetts



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415-861-KIDS (5437) or email jude@colage.org
Pledge Form Inside! • For More info Contact COLAGE

BOWL FOR PLEDGES ★ SPONSER A BOWLER ★ ULTRA COOL PRIZES!!

JOIN US TO HAVE FUN AND TO RAISE MONEY FOR
COLAGE BAY AREA PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES!

Sunday • December 10th, 2000 • 1pm-4pm
Yerba Buena Bowling Center • 750 Folsom St. • SF

COLAGE FIFTH ANNUAL BOWL-A-THON

COLAGE FIFTH ANNUAL BOWL-A-THON

Sunday • December 10th, 2000 • 1pm-4pm
 Yerba Buena Bowling Center • 750 Folsom St. • SF

★ JOIN US FOR FUN! ★
FAMILY & FRIENDS

RAISE MONEY FOR **COLAGE** (CHILDREN OF LESBIANS AND GAYS EVERYWHERE)
 AND OUR WORK ON BEHALF OF DAUGHTERS AND SONS OF
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COLAGE PROVIDES SUPPORT, ADVOCACY, AND
 EDUCATION TO THOUSANDS OF BAY AREA FAMILIES. **COLAGE** SPONSORS
 SUPPORT GROUPS, CONFERENCES, A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER, A PEN PAL
 PROGRAM, TEEN PANELS, PICNICS, ACTIVITIES, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

★ **ULTRA COOL PRIZES AWARDED TO:** ★
 LOWEST SCORES ★ HIGHEST SCORES ★ BEST BOWLING OUTFIT
 HIGHEST NUMBER OF PLEDGES ★ AND MUCH MORE!

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COLAGE BOWL-A-THON

To raise money for COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) and their work for children with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender parents.

Sunday • December 10th, 2000 • 1pm-4pm • Yerba Buena Bowling Center • 750 Folsom St. • SF

P · L · E · D · G · E F · O · R · M

Bowler's name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

bowler's instructions are on Q&A page.

Sponsors Name	Address/City/ State	Zip	Phone	Pledge	Paid
X Janet Sample	99 Sample St., San Francisco, CA	94949	(415) 555-1212	\$25	X
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
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18.					

I release COLAGE and its organizers from any claims or liability resulting from my participation in the COLAGE Bowl-a-thon.

signature of bowler _____ date _____ signature of parent/guardian if bowler under 18 _____ date _____
Total: please bring full amount to the event.

Pledges Received: _____ For Office Use Only
 Cash _____ Check _____ Due _____ Name:

B.O.W.L.E.R I.N.F.O.R.M.A.T.I.O.N

Q. ARE YOU NUTS? I CAN'T BOWL!

A. OOOH YES YOU CAN! LET OUT YOUR INNER-BOWLER AND COME MEET LOTS OF OTHER PEOPLE WHO THINK A SPARE IS WHAT'S IN THE TRUNK. AND IF YOUR INNER-BOWLER DOESN'T DO IT FOR YOU, THERE'LL ALSO BE YUMMY FOOD, SILLY PRIZES, AND MUCH MORE.



Q. SO WHERE IS THIS PLACE?

A. YERBA BUENA BOWLING CENTER
750 FOLSOM ST. (B/T 3RD & 4TH), SF
2ND FL., LOCATED AT THE ROOFTOP AT
YERBA BUENA GARDENS, ON THE ROOF OF
MOSCONI CONVENTION CENTER.
NEED MORE DIRECTIONS?
CALL YERBA BUENA BOWLING CENTER AT
(415) 777-3727 OR VISIT

WWW.SKATEBOWL.COM/ AND CLICK ON "LOCATION".

6 EASY STEPS TO BECOMING A FABULOUS COLAGE BOWLER

1. ANYONE CAN BOWL. LITTLE KIDS, PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, TEENAGERS, GEN-XERS, AND EVERYONE IN BETWEEN CAN DO IT.
TIP: EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATES GETS A FABULOUS PRIZE!

2. TAKE THIS PLEDGE SHEET WHEREVER YOU GO, AND SIGN UP FRIENDS, FAMILY, CO-WORKERS -- YOU GET THE IDEA.
TIP: ASK PEOPLE WHO WILL GIVE LOTS OF SUPPORT TO PLEDGE YOU FIRST, TO SET A STRONG EXAMPLE.
TIP #2: ON THE OUTGOING MESSAGE OF YOUR ANSWERING MACHINE OR VOICE MAIL, LEAVE A REQUEST FOR PLEDGES.

3. COLLECT ALL THE PLEDGES BEFORE THE BOWL-A-THON, WITH CHECKS MADE PAYABLE TO "COLAGE"
TIP: ATTACH AN ENVELOPE TO THIS SHEET AND COLLECT THE MONEY AS YOU SIGN PEOPLE UP.

4. BRING THIS SHEET AND ALL THE MONEY YOU'VE COLLECTED TO THE BOWL-A-THON.
TIP: IF YOU DON'T COME, PLEASE MAIL EVERYTHING TO COLAGE, 3543 18TH ST, #1 SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94110

5. SET A PLEDGE GOAL FOR YOURSELF - \$100, \$250, \$500.
TIP: PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED TO THE TOP PLEDGE-GETTER, THE HIGHEST AND LOWEST GAME SCORES, AND ANYONE WHO COLLECTS MORE THAN \$100 IN PLEDGES!

6. BOWL!
TIP: YOU GET ONE FREE GAME, FREE SHOES, AND A FREE BALL FOR THE DURATION!
Note: Bowlers who don't collect pledges pay \$20 to participate in the event.

★ NEW! SPONSOR-A-BOWLER PROGRAM! ★

MAKE PLEDGES COUNT EVEN MORE WITH OUR SPONSOR-A-BOWLER PROGRAM!

HERE'S HOW! YOU CHOOSE TO MATCH THE PLEDGES SOLICITED BY BOWLERS. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS CALL COLAGE AT 415-861-KIDS AND TELL US WHICH PLEDGE RANGE YOU WANT TO MATCH. THEN, WE'LL PAIR YOU UP WITH A BOWLER IN THAT PLEDGE RANGE! YOU CAN ALSO CHOOSE TO SPONSOR A GROUP OF BOWLERS WHO ARE GETTING PLEDGES AS A TEAM.

THE PLEDGE RANGES ARE:
\$25-\$50 • \$50-\$100
\$100-\$250 • \$250 AND UP!

TIP: IT'S A GREAT WAY TO RAISE MONEY IF YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO COLLECT PLEDGES OR CAN'T MAKE IT TO THE BOWL-A-THON.
TIP #2: ASK YOUR EMPLOYERS TO CONSIDER SPONSORING A GROUP OF BOWLERS (SUCH AS A COLAGE GROUP OR HIGH SCHOOL GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE) BY MATCHING THE GROUP'S PLEDGES.

YOUR HARD EARNED PLEDGES WILL GO TOWARDS NEW AND EXCITING BAY AREA COLAGE PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS! INCLUDING:

- 6 BAY AREA SUPPORT/ACTIVITY GROUPS FOR COLAGERS IN MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL.
- COLAGE NOTES-A BAY AREA NEWSLETTER
- TEEN PANELS IN BAY AREA SCHOOLS.
- COLAGE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES SUCH AS CAMPING TRIPS, ART SHOWS, AND DANCES.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

5-10 HOURS A MONTH:

- EVENTS COMMITTEE
- NEWSLETTER
- FACILITATE GROUPS
- HELP AROUND THE OFFICE

1-2 HOURS A MONTH:

- GUEST ARTISTS AND ONE-TIME WORKSHOP PRESENTERS
- HELP WITH MAILINGS
- FLYERING FOR EVENTS AND GROUPS
- PHOTOGRAPHER FOR EVENTS

QUESTIONS? • CALL COLAGE AT (415) 861-KIDS (5437) • EMAILJUDE@COLAGE.ORG

FALL 2000

COLAGE KIDS CLUB

Special Section for Younger Members

FUN PAGES

for kids with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents

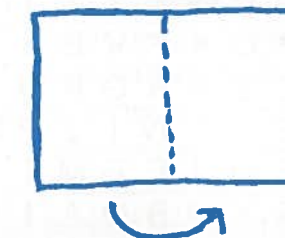
INSIDE

Pop-Up Page 1
Cubby's Word Search 2

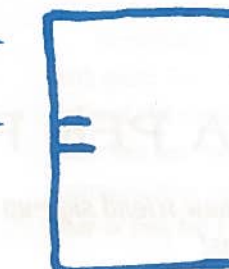
Adventures with Alex will be back next issue!

POP-UP PAGE!

1 Take an 8 1/2 x 11" piece of paper and fold it in half.



2 Using a ruler, on the fold of the page, draw two lines going towards the opening.

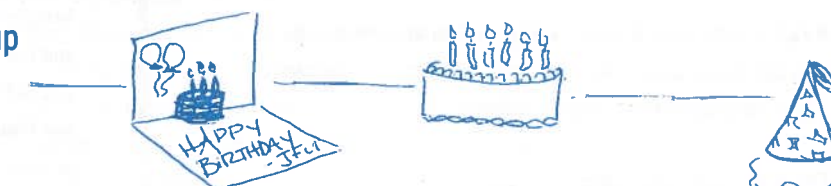


3 Take scissors and cut along those lines. Be careful cutting!



4 Open the page and fold the cut you just made so that when you hold the page like this, it looks like an upside-down and regular "v."

5 Draw a design or cut out pictures from an old magazine. Glue one onto the tab. Decorate the rest of the page.



Hint: You can use the pop-up page as a birthday card!

CUBBY'S WORD SEARCH

Created by Ricky, 10, San Francisco

Q	Y	P	T	I	F	R	W	G	J	U	H	X	X	M	K	O	L	G	R
G	C	E	E	R	G	P	U	K	I	R	F	P	V	U	L	G	C	A	P
E	R	O	K	O	E	U	D	G	T	U	O	W	X	M	J	I	E	M	D
D	T	W	M	F	I	M	U	F	L	V	K	G	O	J	F	H	W	G	V
W	O	R	F	U	H	R	H	D	E	J	G	M	F	S	R	C	W	Y	A
B	A	G	C	Z	P	E	B	X	Y	U	Q	Q	A	L	Z	R	G	X	K
L	I	U	Z	A	M	I	D	I	M	U	S	P	Z	C	W	J	W	U	
W	L	F	V	J	S	G	Y	A	N	J	H	Y	F	L	H	F	B	Z	Y
B	B	V	R	H	T	C	B	J	W	D	F	N	R	G	Y	O	N	O	J
P	Q	A	R	X	U	L	I	R	W	R	E	S	F	V	O	I	F	C	H
V	R	W	O	O	M	D	E	S	K	G	R	S	K	Y	W	M	T	H	
J	P	P	S	M	U	Q	A	O	N	I	F	Z	S	T	Y	S	A	S	V
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W	T	E	O	J	F	E	M	T	B	O	M	P	S	H	Z	P	U	D	O
L	G	R	X	M	B	O	A	I	U	O	P	Z	P	C	Y	B	R	M	O
X	E	Q	B	P	C	F	I	K	H	P	N	W	T	E	N	X	G	F	L

Find these words:

- BINDERS
- BOOKS
- CHOIR
- COMPUTERS
- DESK
- HOMEROOM
- HUMANITIES
- LOCKERS
- MATH
- PENCILS
- PENS
- PHYSED
- SCHOOL
- SCIENCE

WANT A PEN PAL?

If you would like a new friend sign-up for COLAGE Connections!

- Sign-up on our website: www.colage.org or send us the following info: First Name, Last Name, Age, Address, City, State, Zip Code, Country, Email Address, Male or Female?, Is HIV/AIDS an issue in your life? yes or no
- Part 1: What would you like your pen pal to know about you? Include hobbies, likes or dislikes, what is your family like, etc. Please be as specific as possible.
- Part 2: What kind of person would you like as a pen pal. Be as specific as possible (i.e. age preference, male or female, geographical location, family situation.)

Email: penpal@colage.org

SEND US ART!

See your creations in the Fun Pages!
CREATE WHAT?

Draw, paint, write (under 200 words) a short story, poem, or play, make a maze, word search, or paper dolls...let your imagination run wild and send your us your creation! Please attach the title of your artwork plus your: First Name, Last Name, Age, Address, City, State, Zip Code, Country, Email Address

INSTRUCTIONS:

We need Fun Pages ideas. What do you want in the fun pages? Do you have suggestions or ideas? COLAGE wants to hear from you!

Send Pen Pal info, artwork, and Fun Pages ideas to:
COLAGE, 3543 18th St. #1
San Francisco, CA 94110
or email: funpages@colage.org

2nd Generation

A SPECIAL SECTION FOR QUEER AND QUESTIONING KIDS OF LGBT PARENTS



DATELINE DAN

MY LIFE AS A STUDENT

By Dan Cherubin

Admittedly, it's been a long time since I have been in school. I will say that algebra, chemistry and history all turned out to be extremely important, but learning how to fill out those bubble sheets have served no purpose in real life. Let me reflect on three stages of my schooling, as a COLAGE and Second Generation guy:

HIGH SCHOOL

I was a misfit in high school. I was well-liked, but people just thought I was weird. It was a closeted time for both me and Mom. I knew what my feelings were but I had no one to talk to about them. I also knew that my parents' marriage was nearing an end, and neither of them seemed very happy. My other mom, Tina, had already entered the picture, and I was beginning to have my suspicions about her and Mom.

There were no gay-straight student alliances in those days. No gay youth groups that I knew of, either. I heard about a guy in Rhode Island who took his boyfriend to the prom, but those stories seemed so far away. I did have one friend, Sharon, whose mom came out as a lesbian. I told her my feelings about my mom (though not about myself). It was a thrilling connection. Sharon will

always be the first person I met who understood my situation. Thanks, babe. Still, being only two people with this odd secret was frustrating at times.

COLLEGE

New, but very small, environment. Shenanigans between anybody on campus were automatically known by the entire college at lunch the next day. I craved to meet others like me, but I got immediately ousted from the GLBT group because I "didn't take things seriously". Who said we couldn't team up with the Ultimate Frisbee team? I think my main problem was wondering why we should be so isolated in an already tiny population. And I still think all groups should have a sense of fun. They could have done so much in the way of gay-straight relations with just one DJ and some kegs, rather than countless hours of processing, proselytizing, and posing.

Mom & Tina moved in together "to share expenses" (evidently, things were so tight they had to share one set of sheets and a bed, too). When mom came out to me, she was very anxious that I don't talk too much about it. I saw this as a problem. If she wasn't comfortable with herself, how could I be with her—or myself?

I told my mom about me. I then fell into a year-long relationship with a self-defined

lesbian. Go figure. To this day, mom can't find pictures of my various graduations, but damned if those snapshots of me and Heidi aren't readily available.

GRAD SCHOOL

I attended a tiny grad school in a huge University with a major gay population. I worked two jobs as a full time student which curtailed much club joining. I invited a group up to "the moms" (as they are now called) house for Passover. There I realized I was more nervous talking about my moms' sexuality than mine. I started shaking when I had to tell them. My friends all looked at me like I was a moron.

On the other hand, mom joined PFLAG with gusto. But she never talked about herself and still doesn't refer to herself as a lesbian. This was the beginning of little, if any, communication between us. It only lasted a year or two, but I think it did us both good.

LESSONS LEARNED

Be true to your own feelings, even if they're not totally PC. Not every group may be for you. If you think your student alliance isn't doing all it could, see what you can do to get what YOU want to happen. Remember, various opinions make for good discussion. And get a degree. It can't hurt! ♦♦♦

Dan Cherubin lives in New York City with a fat cat and thin walls. He founded Second Generation back in 1991 because he "wanted to have some fun"

Stay tuned for Kate's Korner and other second gen voices in upcoming issues!

- **Social Activities:** Movie Nights, barbeques and picnics, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQQ)-friendly parties, dances and proms – partying without prejudice!
- **Climate Survey:** A tool to determine a school's "temperature", or attitude, towards sexual orientation/gender identity issues. Evan's GSA surveyed 1200 students at their school. According to Evan, the results revealed students' ignorance, misconceptions and even contradictory feelings regarding LGBTQQ people. Evan also observed that students reported that they heard a lot of homophobic slurs, and that teachers didn't make an effort to punish them, but that "very few people admitted that they used these words themselves."
- **Teaching the Teachers:** Information from Climate Surveys can be used to bring the need for education on LGBT issues to the attention of teachers and administrators. GSA members make presentations to school staff to advocate for a better staff response to discrimination and harassment, the integration of LGBTQQ issues, history and culture into the curriculum, and creating safe space for LGBTQQ youth and straight allies.
- **Political and Community Activism:** Work on the school, district, city, state, or national level on issues that affect LGBT people, their friends, and families. Activism can be extremely local: many GSAs participate in the National Day of Silence, remaining silent all day as a way of bringing attention to the silencing of LGBT voices in our society.
- **Peer Education through Open Discussion:** One of the most powerful effects a GSA can have is to break the silence surrounding issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. Sabra Behrouzy-Far, 17, a 2000 graduate, started Students for a Tolerant Community (STC) in her Brighton, NY high school. She says that at their first meeting, "we knew right away that

this was something that was needed. There were so many concerns not being met." Last year STC hosted an interfaith discussion of LGBTQQ issues with representatives from seven community churches; other GSAs have held family panels to explore homophobia's impact on the family.

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH: CHALLENGES FACED BY GSAS

In a few communities, students have run into resistance from school administrators, other students, teachers, and community members. Although discrimination against GSAs or LGBTQQ social/support groups is illegal¹, Some school districts have tried to prevent GSAs from forming. In Salt Lake City, UT, the school board banned all student clubs in order to get around the law and shut down the GSA.² Lack of community support has been the exception, though, not the rule. And experience has shown that when dealing with those who do not support GSAs, patience and persistence do help. Carolyn Laub, 26, founded the Gay-Straight Alliance Network to provide support to GSAs. When facing adverse reaction Carolyn has some recommendations: "If your flyers are ripped down or defaced, just keep putting them back up. Eventually those who are ripping them down will get tired of it...Some groups are now putting up index cards behind each GSA poster stating, 'You've just committed a hate crime' to send home the message that it's not okay to take them down in the first place."

The more common challenges encountered in running GSAs are basically the same as those in any other club: logistics, motivation, and time management. "I had to go up to individual people, personally, and ask them to get involved," says Evan. Sharing your GSA organizing skills and responsibilities with other students while you are running the club can be key because eventually you will graduate and need strong leaders to continue the club. As with many student-run clubs, having supportive faculty advisors to help navigate through your school's


systems, promote your meetings and events, advocate on your behalf with administration and staff, and make the most of your resources can be a big advantage.

CREATING CHANGE ONE CLASS AT A TIME

The transformation of our schools into safe, inclusive learning environments for LGBTQQ people and straight allies can be challenging work and isn't an overnight job. However all the COLAGERS we interviewed were enthusiastic about their club's impact and about making a difference for other students from LGBT families. Ashley told us 10% of the teachers and students voluntarily painted their faces with a rainbow stripe to show their support during Awareness Week. "It's so great to have people -- your friends, teachers, even people you don't know -- saying, 'Look, I'm OK with this, let's work together to decrease this homophobia junk.'" Evan pointed out, "The fact that the club exists, even if it's not very active right now, still makes it safer for those who are in the closet."

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

GSAs bring new perspectives to the school community, making sexual orientation and gender identity issues visible in ways never before possible. If the idea of creating change from within in your school sounds like a good idea, get involved in your school's GSA or start one! Don't worry about starting small; as Ashley said about her own experience, "it doesn't take more than one person to create make a huge difference in your school."

COLAGE congratulates all the individuals and GSAs for your trailblazing contributions in making schools safer for all students! 

¹ The Federal Equal Access Act requires that public schools ensure equal treatment for all student-run clubs.

² The Salt Lake City school board is reinstating school clubs, including GSAs, this October after a four-year ban. Orange County, CA has also said that it will abandon its efforts to ban GSAs this year.

STUDENT & YOUTH ACTIVISM

In addition to COLAGE, check out these other resources:

GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE NETWORK

A youth-led organization empowering youth activists to fight homophobia in schools. They have helpful guides and information for all aspects of starting or running a GSA. 965 Mission St. Ste. 218 San Francisco, CA 94103 Tel: 415-442-4726 Email: carolyn@gsanetwork.org Website: <http://www.gsanetwork.org>

GLSEN: GAY, LESBIAN AND STRAIGHT EDUCATION NETWORK STUDENT PRIDE PROJECT

A national project working to network Gay-Straight Alliances. 121 West 27th St. Ste. 804 New York, NY 10001 Tel: 212-727-0135 ext. 134 Email: studentpride@glsen.org Website: <http://www.glsen.org>

NYAC NATIONAL YOUTH ADVOCACY COALITION

A national organization dedicated to improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. 1638 R St., NW Ste. 300 Washington, DC 20009 Tel: 202-319-7596 Email: nyac@nyac.org Website: <http://www.nyacyouth.org>



THE DAY OF SILENCE PROJECT

A youth-run organization that helps high schools and colleges in the United States and Canada to organize a Day of Silence at their school. Email: dayofsilence@hotmail.com Website: <http://www.youth-guard.org/dayofsilence>

SPEAK OUT!

This issue's question is: "What does your school do to make kids with LGBT parents feel more safe and welcome? What else could your school do?"

Kate, 17, Washington: "As a junior in high school I finally became comfortable "outing" my parents. I think it is important to increase awareness. In my school I am completely open about my parents, I have also informed faculty members to direct any kids with LGBT parents to me if they need to talk - or just somebody to relate to. I also think that the concept of LGBT parents needs to be included in any GSA or panel discussion - whatever! The Washington Safe Schools Coalition has a great poster - "All Families Welcome". It is amazing how the presence of something as simple as a poster can make somebody feel secure!!"

Tiffany, 23, California: "As far as any administrative part of my high school career went, there was no involvement. Of course, as far as I knew, no one knew. LGBT issues, however, were rarely, if at all, addressed."

Julie, 17, Illinois: "At my school, not only wasn't it a friendly environment, it was downright hostile. The teachers didn't just not discourage gay jokes and insults, they joined in. I had three teachers in the space of about a month make insulting remarks about gays. No effort was made to include diversity, in any form, in any discipline with the

exception of English. My research paper teacher let me bring in my dad when I was doing my presentation on LGBT parenting (after doing a paper on gay and lesbian adoption), and my creative writing teacher really enjoyed a poem I wrote about my dads. It's better other places, I've heard."

Henry, age 9, Rhode Island: "Kids need to learn about differences in others. I felt very hurt by what the other kids said when I told them I had a gay dad. They called me gay. It made me angry and I wanted to quit school and lock myself in a corner. I was lucky enough to have a teacher that I could talk to about how I was feeling." Henry strongly feels that schools should have strict rules that are enforced against teasing or harming any kids with LGBT parents or otherwise. He also feels that before punishing kids who break these rules, they should teach these kids about differences, including LGBT issues. Lastly, Henry feels that teachers should bring in books and read to the kids about issues of diversity including kids with LGBT parents. "Educating other kids is essential to helping kids with LGBT parents deal with this issue in school."

We hope that you find these words of experience from other COLAGERS interesting and relevant to your lives. If you would like to add your opinion to this discussion, or suggest a topic for the next SpeakOUT, contact Rosanne Johnson in the COLAGE office. JFU@colage.org

COLAGE NOTES

SEEKING VOLUNTEER WEBSPINNERS

Would you like to volunteer for COLAGE? Do you have web upkeep and designing experience? Then we need you to help out with the COLAGE website!

Our website is packed full of stories by COLAGERS, interactive activities, information & resources, membership forms, chapter information, news, events, and projects, photos, and much more! Contact Jude at COLAGE for further details, questions or to volunteer.

Requirements:

- Familiar with HTML
- Familiar or can learn rudimentary cgi
- Have net access (ftp, www)
- Our site is created using Adobe GoLive, so experience with that is preferred (however, if the site is redone, any tool can be used)
- Can perform basic image editing
- Organized

NEW LOGO

Colage has exciting news! After many years COLAGE is in the process of updating it's logo. In the next year as we plan for our second decade, we will also be reevaluating our image and our logo. In the meantime, we have made a few changes to our old logo. We hope you like our new look and we'll keep you posted about things to come.

NEWS AROUND THE OFFICE

Jude Koski has now been with COLAGE for more than a year, congratulations Jude. At the time of Jude's annual evaluation he was promoted from Field and Chapter Coordinator to Program Coordinator. We look forward to another exciting year, way to go Jude!

CONNECT WITH COLAGERS ONLINE

COLAGE moderates two email discussion groups, one for children up to 14 y.o. and another for 14 y.o. and up. Both are moderated by adult COLAGERS and about 200 children of LGBT parents participate in the groups combined. Kids subscribed to the lists live in all different parts of the U.S. and world!

To subscribe to kids-of-gays email lists visit:

Under 14 y.o.:

http://www.colage.org/email_lists/kog/sub_form.html

14 y.o. and up:

http://www.colage.org/email_lists/kog14/sub_form.html

COLAGE ON THE ROAD

As COLAGE continues to grow our staff is able to go more places to participate in meetings, conferences, events, and chapter activities. Where have we been in the last year?

- Washington, DC
- New York City, NY
- Philadelphia, PA
- Madison, WI
- Los Angeles, CA
- Fresno, CA
- Chicago, IL
- Atlanta, GA
- Montclair, NJ
- Saugatuck, MI
- Boston, MA
- Provincetown, MA

RECEIVE COLAGE'S EMAIL NEWSLETTER!

COLAGE has a bi-monthly national email news list. It's a great way to keep updated on news, action alerts, and events for and about lgbt families. We also have a new list for the Bay Area, if you live in the Bay Area please sign up. Here's how to join either list:

To receive San Francisco/Bay Area NetNews:

Simply send a blank email (no subject or body) to: COLAGE_NetNews_BAY_AREA-subscribe@igc.topica.com

To receive National COLAGE NetNews:

Simply send a blank email (no subject or body) to: COLAGE_NetNews-subscribe@igc.topica.com
Or you can go to: www.colage.org

WE'RE CONNECTED

COLAGE believes strongly in collaborating with groups whose missions are complimentary to our own. Some of the forums we participate in and groups we work with include :

- National Policy Roundtable convened by NGLTF
- Family Policy Working Group convened by Family Pride Coalition
- PFLAG
- Bay Area Family Collaboration
- GLAAD
- Family Net
- Planet Out
- Alternative Family Magazine

GROUP UPDATE

COLAGE NY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-BASED GROUP

Over the summer *Just For Us* caught up with Robbie, who co-leads one of two COLAGE groups based in elementary schools in Ithaca, New York. Robbie told us about the COLAGE groups' many exciting school-wide activities over the past two years.

Ms. Sanders' group at Belle Sherman Elementary has been active for about three years. The group's regular members – last year, about 14 – are kindergartners through fifth graders. According to Ms. Sanders, some of her COLAGERS come from families where there has been a divorce and a parent has come out. Others have lived only with gay parents all their lives. The Belle Sherman COLAGE group supports its members, and educates their fellow students, by introducing gay and lesbian history and culture into the curriculum in fun new ways. For example, last year, pictures of famous gay and lesbian entertainers, athletes, and politicians were hidden around the school. When COLAGE members came around to find them, teachers responded by making a brief presentation to the students about the gay person and their contribution to society. The teachers introduced well-known gay people such as singer Elton John and Olympic diver Greg Louganis.

Each year, Belle Sherman COLAGE (and its buddy group at Fall Creek Elementary, co-led by Susan Eschbach and Harriet Alpert) celebrate Pride with the whole school. In 1999, The Out Loud Chorus, a gay and lesbian-friendly singing group from Ithaca, performed at Belle Sherman. The Chorus sang moving and spirited songs like "Seasons of Love", from the musical "Rent". Students were offered rainbow ribbons to wear if they wanted to show their support.

Another unique opportunity for COLAGERS last year was a self-defense workshop for kids with gay parents, attended by kids from both schools and the local community.

Belle Sherman and Fall Creek COLAGERS have the treasure of commitment from their community, school staff, and families in creating a safe and supportive environment for all students. Just for Us wishes them all another fantastic school year in 2000-2001!

COLAGE CHAPTER PHOTO ALBUM



Jude, COLAGE Program Coordinator, with COLAGE Portland on a Chapter Retreat.



Chapter Coordinators Abigail Garner and Anna Heller hanging out at Provincetown Family Week.