



3543 18th Street, #1
San Francisco, CA 94110



COLAGE Evaluation and survey inside, We want to hear from YOU!



*****3-DIGIT 941
SUSAN STRYKER
GAY AND LESBIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
973 MARKET ST STE 400
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94103-1715

2 1



COLAGE GROUPS

U.S.

CA

COLAGE LA
Tara Rose & Emily Gold
(310) 824-5433
la@colage.org

COLAGE SF/Bay Area
(415) 861-KIDS
cathy@colage.org

COLAGE San Diego
Heather Berberet
(619) 692-2077
sandiego@colage.org

DC

COLAGE Metro DC
Ryan LaLonde
(202) 332-7380
metrodc@colage.org

FL

COLAGE
Miami / Fort Lauderdale
Daniel Lessem & Melanie Joy Cohn
954-463-9005 x225 or
305-531-3066
southflorida@colage.org

COLAGE Orlando
Ricky Ashburn
(407) 897-2266
orlando@colage.org

IL

COLAGE Chicago
Tina Fakhriddin
(773) 381-2905
chicago@colage.org

MA

COLAGE Boston
Anna & Molly Heller
(617) 628-3251
boston@colage.org

COLAGE Northampton
Aime Degrenier & Heather King
(413) 527-8867
nohocolage@colage.org

COLAGE Western Mass
Heather Egan
(413) 572-0849
westmass@colage.org

MN

COLAGE Twin Cities
tel. 800-800-0350 x513
twincities@colage.org

MO

COLAGE Kansas City
Sande Woods
(816) 531-4104
Gail Smith Stone
(913) 893-6662
houseofstone@kcnet.com

OK

COLAGE Ozarks
Leta Swanson
(417) 877-0724
ozarks@colage.org

NE

COLAGE Nebraska
Laurie Cicotello
(402) 463-7792
nebraska@colage.org

NH

COLAGE New Hampshire
Lisa Belletete & Sarah Cannon
(603) 895-8455
colagenh@colage.org
www.geocities.com/colagenh

NJ

COLAGE New Jersey
Karen & Marilyn
(973) 763-8511
LFNJCOLAGE@aol.com

NY

COLAGE NYC/Center Kids
Claire Knight
(646) 345-2411
nyc@colage.org

OR

COLAGE Fall Creek Elementary
Ithaca, NY
Harriet Alpert
(607) 274-6829

COLAGE Belle Sherman Elementary
Robbie Sanders
Ithaca, NY
(607) 274-2206

OK

PFLAG Tulsa Kids Group
Nancy McDonald
(918) 749-4901
nancymcd@aol.com

OR

COLAGE Portland
(503) 228-3892
lmfamily@teleport.com

TX

JFU Houston
Kim Ortiz & Kristi Maldonado
(713) 284-4939
houston@colage.org

COLAGE

Dallas Parish & Angela Stapleton
(214) 324-8097
dallas@colage.org

WA

COLAGE Seattle
Kate Formueller & Lisa Tessoroff
(206) 461-4546
seattle@colage.org

WI

COLAGE Madison
Sol Kelley-Jones
(608) 255-8582
madison@colage.org

COLAGE Milwaukee
Loree Cook-Daniels
milwaukee@colage.org

WY

COLAGE Cheyenne
(307) 635-5262
cheyenne@colage.org

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JUST FOR US

FOCUS ON BREAKUPS AND DIVORCE

SUMMER 2001

FOR PEOPLE WITH LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER PARENTS

MANDY'S STORY An Adult Adjusts to her Parents' Divorce

Just for Us spoke with Mandy Hollingshead of Vancouver, British Columbia about her parents' recent divorce, and how it has affected her life. Mandy is 22, and is working towards her bachelor's degree in music. After college, she is planning to teach music in elementary schools. The oldest of three siblings, Mandy currently lives with Martin, her boyfriend of 6 years, and their two cats Founder and Mia.

JFU: How did you first become aware of your parents' divorce?

Mandy: My parents divorced this year, but they separated with the intention of divorce when I was 20. I had no idea it was coming, it was like a slap in the face. I found out on Thanksgiving Day. It was my Mom telling me over the phone that my Dad had moved out and she had helped him. I didn't know at that point that he was gay.

I was so angry I jumped on a bus the next morning to go find out what was going on. All of my anger was directed at my father, my mother had been (to my eyes) very supportive of everything he had been going through, all the turmoil. For two years, he had been through a very difficult time, struggling with depression.

JFU: What was your reaction to finding out that your Dad was gay?

Mandy: Soon after that, my Dad told me in person that he was gay, it was weird - I don't remember any of the conversation except one little bit. Just before he got to the end, I was thinking, "My god, he's going to tell me he's gay, but that can't be because he doesn't even like gay people!" This was an assumption that I had made a few years earlier.

JFU: Were you comfortable talking to your friends and family about your parents' divorce and why it happened?

Mandy: I didn't tell *continued on page 2*



Tina, top right, and Jude, Program Coordinator, with the youth and young adult participants at the Rainbow Family Conference. Chicago, IL, Winter 2000

Rob's Perspective:

LOOKING BACK ON A CHANGE OF ATTITUDE

I sat, staring down at the wooden table. Outside, beneath a slate gray sky, the trees were bare and skeletal; the grass was a dull brown. The sharp bite of winter seemed to have forced nature into hiatus, but the table gleamed with a healthy shine. My parents assembled us with drawn faces and soft voices. Sitting there, I gazed at the table and my hands. I had a little bit of dirt under my left thumbnail. My mother, with a scratchy voice and eyes red from crying, told us, quite euphemistically, that they had "agreed to separate for a little while."



Rob at Family Week

The after-bedtime fights, during which I lay wrapped in the cool embrace of the dark, had come to an end. I remember staring upwards, wincing at each muffled yell, each slam of the door. I remember when she moved out of their bedroom, not because it heralded the coming divorce, but because she moved into the room with the computer and TV. And now it was over. They were divorced. I was ten years old.

In our fifth grade society, there were some people on the outskirts of civilization whom we treated with disdain and, at times, outright hostility. Rivka had greasy, disagreeable hair, that always stuck out to one side or another. Perhaps it was her name, perhaps it was her hair, or perhaps it was just our need for a scapegoat that led us to tease her. Fifth grade boys can be pretty despicable. In fall

continued on page 8

NOBODY TOLD ME...

by Molly Hennessy-Fiske

It began with my trip to France or rather, return trip. Ever come back from a big voyage determined to surprise? That was me. Two months minding seven enfants terrible as an au pair gave me the will and the means at age 18. Dirty blonde mop became a trim black pixie cut as I traded my overalls for a diminutive mini skirt and Extra Sugar Free gum for Lucky Strikes. No wonder Mom cried when she spotted me.

Actually, it had nothing to do with me. Mom was a wreck. She'd been contemplating a break-up for months while I'd been planning my trip. I was oblivious. Just like when my parents divorced a decade before. Back then, I'd thought they were sitting my sister and me down to announce the birth of a dreaded third sibling. Ick - more sharing. Instead, I got two houses, two televisions and two happier parents. Why should this split be any different?

Well, she wasn't married. Committed, yes and settled. Exhibit a: house, b: kids, c: dog. All this she shared with a woman from the time I was 12 until that day in the car at Kennedy International *continued on page 4*

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Summer is all around us. Long days, warm nights, summer camp, Family Week, good times for the whole family. Well, maybe the whole family. In this issue of Just For Us, in addition to our regular features, we are examining issues of breaking up. A lot of children, youth, and young adults face parental break ups - sometimes opposite sex parents break up because one or more of them come out, sometimes same-sex parents move apart, sometimes a parent and a "step-parent" split up.

There are endless variations, but what these situations have in common is that decisions between adults affect us, the kids. Sometimes the transition goes well - love turns to friendship and we kids maintain close relationships with each party. Sometimes we kids are hoping for a break up, harboring anger that parents are staying together "for the sake of the children," even when it's obvious to everyone that it is long past time for a separation. Sometimes, we are caught in

bitter battles for custody or visitation, torn between people we love and swept up in animosity that has nothing to do with us.

On top of all of these delicate emotional landscapes is our experience of homophobia. When our friends ask us why our dad is moving out, what do we say? "Because he's gay" isn't often the safest response. Quickly the pain of the break up is mixed into a confusing and frustrating vat of issues about sexuality or coming out issues. It's not unusual in same-sex break ups to experience extended family or friends' ignorance of our familial relationships. "Why do you care so much that Mary is moving out? She's not your real mom. I don't understand why you're so upset" Ouch.

Then there are the legal troubles. Young children whose relationship to their non-biological or non-adoptive parent is not legally recognized might lose that person as a parent or lose that person altogether in their lives. Sometimes our legal parent goes to court and uses the often homophobic legal system to deny our other parent visitation or shared custody of us. Suddenly a person we grew up knowing as mom disappears forever from our life.

Please read this issue of Just For Us closely. It is filled with the words of people who are struggling to come to terms with transitions in their families and to find a new path toward healing. Breaking up is never easy, and it can be even harder when you have to cloak the truth in secrecy and lies. At COLAGE we have a commitment to providing opportunities for our participants to voice their experiences in their own words. If we can't do it here, where can we?

If your family is in a time of change or transition, we hope you feel a little less alone by the time you're done reading this publication. If you want to talk with other young people directly about what you're experiencing, look to see if we have a chapter near you, request a pen pal, or join one of our on-line discussion groups. I guarantee you, you'll find someone who understands.

Wishing you and your family love through the good times and bad,

Yours truly,

Felicia Park-Rogers
Executive Director

Mandy's Story continued from page 1

most people about my Dad being gay. My boyfriend was the first to know after me, but I had been asked by my Dad not to tell anyone else until he was more comfortable with his "new" status. When I did start telling people, they received it with a "no big deal" attitude. To them I was still the same person and so was my father. The fact that my parents were split just made it more normal for them since most of their parents were also divorced.

JFU: How has it been for you, dealing with the divorce and your Dad's coming out?

Mandy: The divorce has definitely been the difficult part. To this day I still cry hard whenever I think about it for too long. My Dad's coming out has been easier, mostly because the few people I have told have been supportive. Although I needed it, I just couldn't afford to go and see a counselor and talk it out.

JFU: What are your relationships like today with your Dad, your Mom, and their new partners?

Mandy: The relationship with my Dad is a rocky one. I think that he has changed dramatically from the man I knew as my father 10 years ago. We have always had a stormy relationship, but I've always been very close to him too. I am trying to get to know him again, as a new man, I'm trying to understand his new attitude about life and about what being a gay man means to him.

My relationship with his partner is rather fragile. We got off on the wrong foot. Now I've gotten to know Paul better. We're not the best of friends, but I am starting to think of him as part of an extended family.

My Mom has grown so much since the separation. She's discovered new things

(like email!) and now has a new home that she just moved into and is renovating slowly. I'm also grateful that my Mom and Dad are best friends. My mother will actually do lunch with Paul without my Dad around. They will chat on the phone and do crafts and garage sales together. My Mom may have lost her marriage, but she has gained an independence I've never seen in her before, and she's gained two new friends!

JFU: How have the divorce, and your Dad's coming out, affected your understanding of your own sexual identity?

Mandy: Right after I found out I was thrown in to a huge sexual identity crisis. I used to cry if I found another woman attractive because I thought that I was gay and I didn't want to be. I had a caring loving boyfriend who had been with me during the 5 toughest years of my life. It took a year before I could trust that my boyfriend wouldn't end up being gay and "run off" with another man. Eventually the whole phase just passed.

JFU: Do you have any advice for other people going through a divorce because a parent is gay?

Mandy: My parents are still best friends, and that is what makes it so tough to accept the divorce. I don't have any memories of them fighting very much. And none of those fights were big enough to warrant divorce. So in my "child's" mind, I say, "but if you still like each other, why can't you be married?"

For me the gay issue was the easiest and the hardest one to deal with. The main thing is, go and find a person, friend or professional and talk to them about everything that you feel. Nothing is too crazy when you deal with this sort of thing. ■

COLAGE

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

3543 18th Street #1
San Francisco, CA 94110
Tel: (415) 861-KIDS (5437)
E-Mail: colage@colage.org
Fax: (415) 255-8345
Website: www.colage.org

Exec Director: Felicia Park-Rogers
Program Coordinator: Jude Koski
Program Associate: Cathy Sakimura
Interns: Caitlin Bailey, Megan Brown
Newsletter: Rosanne Johnson
Newsletter Design: Arin Fishkin

Board of Directors:

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SPEAK OUT!

This issue's SpeakOUT question was posted to the COLAGE e-mail discussion list for people over 14 or with LGBT parents. The question was, "Does anyone else feel like you want your parents to divorce? It may sound selfish to think this way, but lately I've thought it's not actually - because a divorce would bring a resolution. Any thoughts?"

Below are some of the responses that people posted to the list:

My parents divorced after 23 years, and only stayed together one last year after my dad came out to my mother. This year was necessary to tie up loose ends and sell the family business, etc. I never would have wanted them to stay married for our sake, because my mom and dad's happiness is much more important to me than having a "normal" family. I would rather they be divorced and happy than together and miserable, even if it means more trouble for me.

My parents just celebrated their 27th anniversary three days ago. They plan on staying married. They insist that they are happy in their

marriage, and that they are more at ease now that my father is out to us.

I often wonder how my mom is strong enough to stay married to a gay man. I have so much respect for her I guess that things are much better between my parents now than they were when my father was still in the closet and was feeling so lonely and depressed. From the outside, their marriage still seems "normal."

I, too, have at times thought that it would be easier for my parents to get a divorce. Part of me has felt that it would make sense for them to get divorced...that maybe they are just postponing the inevitable separation that must occur between them. I've mentioned this to my therapist, my parents, and my two sisters, and none of them see where I'm coming from. They all say something like "interesting...." or "huh, that's pretty strange."

I don't really want them to divorce, but then again I never really wanted my father to be gay... we'll just see what happens, and we'll all still love each other.

Part of me has always known my parents wouldn't always be together. But the other part of me says "No, they can't get divorced." But, I know in my heart that it will come someday. And quite frankly right now I wish it would.

I know it's hard for other kids of GLBT parents who have already divorced and are angry with them because of it to understand where we are coming from. You all must think we're CRAZY! But, trust me it's hard having your parents stay married when you know one parent is hurting deep down inside. And it may sound CRAZY but both my parents are nicer when they aren't around each other. Weird, but true.

To join the COLAGE email discussion groups and participate in discussions like this one, visit the COLAGE webpage at www.colage.org. To contribute to SpeakOUT, write to Rosanne Johnson at jfu@colage.org. ■

CHAPTER UPDATE

Sweet Chicago by Tina Fakrid-Deed

In an effort to provide support in every city and town across the globe, COLAGE finds a home in Chicago, - land of da' bulls, da' bears, those cows, and the mighty wind! The new COLAGE chapter was created by daughter of a fabulous lesbian and Chicago native, Tina Fakhridd-Deen. Tina decided to form the organization after attending a Family Pride Conference in the Chicagoland area last October. The new group serves youth ages 13 and up and currently has about five committed members. We plan to grow to at least 15 members by the year's end and focus on increasing cultural diversity among COLAGE members.

Monthly activities for the upcoming year include a poetry slam, family picnic, a roller-skating jam, school survival session, miniature golf and much more! COLAGE Chicago outings are held on the second Saturday of each month. We want to provide a safe, comfortable

haven for youth to discuss important issues, feel supported, and to have some fun! For more information on COLAGE Chicago or if you would like to co-coordinate the program, please call Tina Fakhridd-Deen at (773) 381-2905 or e-mail her at chicago@colage.org. ■



Tina Fakhridd-Deen, Chicago Chapter Coordinator

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

TAKING A STAND AGAINST HOMOPHOBIC LEGISLATION IN ARKANSAS

by COLAGE Board Member Christian Harris

During the recent legislative session, Arkansas State Representative Randy Minton tried to outlaw adoption by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered Arkansans. I heard about his effort, House Bill 1026, and wanted to be involved in the fight against it. I was nervous about becoming involved; I had only done a few "activist-y" things in my life. But the bill was motivated by homophobic bigotry and ignorance, I was a new member of the COLAGE Board of Directors, and the bill pissed me off. So I got involved. Representative Minton introduced HB 1026 in a committee of the Arkansas State House of Representatives. The feeling among the opposition was that the bill was certain to pass if it got to the full House of Representatives, so the goal was to keep the bill from getting out of committee.

A variety of allied groups across Arkansas led the fight against HB 1026, including the ACLU of Arkansas, the Arkansas Equality Project, and Arkansas PFLAG. We had help from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force as well. My own involvement felt pretty limited at the time. I missed several classes doing work around the bill. I lobbied one afternoon at the state legislature when word got out that two of the members were going to shift their position and support the bill. I gave a television interview that aired on the 6:00 and 10:00 news. Most importantly, I attended the Committee meeting every time that the bill came up for a vote, and I signed up to testify in opposition. Seeing me dressed up in a suit and tie and looking like a stereotypical white, male law student, the members of the Committee probably thought that I wanted to show them that a person with a lesbian mom could be every bit as "normal" as they were. I did want to demystify the idea of gay and lesbian parenting for the committee members and put a human face on what they were proposing to do. But I was also just plain mad and I wanted them to know it!

At the beginning of the struggle I assumed that, knowing Arkansas, the bill was certain to pass. But if they were going to take away my mother's rights and the rights of every other gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered person in Arkansas, I wanted them to have to look me in the eye to do it.

As it turned out, I never even got to testify. The scarce time available for debate was used up in a battle of expert witnesses. Thankfully, the bill never made it out of committee - but only by the thinnest of margins. Looking back, I feel like my small contribution was critical to stopping the bill, and it was incredibly rewarding personally. My experience with HB 1026 taught me that a little activism can have a tremendous impact, even in a conservative state like Arkansas. If Representative Minton reintroduces his bill during the next legislative session, I'll be there. ■



Nobody Told Me continued from page 1

Airport when she explained through tears that we were on our own. I had seen my mother upset, but never like this. It scared me that this strong woman who taught me to stand up for myself and love who I choose should be so shaken.

Days later I left her to start college. In the next few months I spent hours on the phone with my mother doing my best to avoid talking about the woman that left us. When my mother's ex-partner called, I hung up. She wrote, and I buried myself in mind-numbing economics homework. By the time I came home that winter, she knew not to bother coming around. My sister arranged visits elsewhere with lures like ice cream and movies. Mom pleaded with me to go along. So did my sister. I still wonder whether she did this just to annoy me. Must have. Little sisters aren't allowed to be right.

But cut me some slack here - nobody told me how to act when a figure is obliterated from the family picture. My parents divorced, but Dad was always there, driving in for a visit or on the other end of the phone. Relatives still ask how he's doing. Those who couldn't place my Mom's former partner didn't seem to miss her. Thanksgiving, Christmas, birthday outings came and went. No one mentioned her. Although I eventually relented and we reconciled when she and Mom tried dating again, it was over. Nobody told me, it just was.

Nobody told me. When crisis strikes, out pops the small child in each of us mut-

tering that refrain. Well, I'm here to say you've been warned. Divorce happens to gay couples and their kids. It wrecks you in ways that straight divorce can't touch. The worst part: when the process turns you inside out - and it will - those insides look pretty depressing. Fear. Shame. Ignorance. What I saw in stark relief were all the ways I'd failed my mother and the woman she loved by being an egotistical, self-absorbed brat. In other words, your typical teenager.

But as my mother says, every step is a place to learn. What I learned was the art of internal housekeeping. My mother's partner helped raise me. She shepherded me through the schizophrenia that is adolescence, taught me to laugh through tears. She is one of my confirmation namesakes. She is important. I was willing to shed my insecurities if it meant keeping her in my life.

That's all it takes, really: a conscious choice. Awkward to negotiate, especially during homecomings to three different homes, but that's what choosing to be related is about. Very grown up. In return, I get to be a "heart daughter." I get midnight phone calls and supertime visits and news of life in her world. So does my sister, I guess. But for once, I think I'm willing to share. ■

Journalist and free-lance writer Molly Hennessy-Fiske, 24, works out of West Palm Beach, Florida.

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world." - Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi, 1869 - 1948, was an Indian political and spiritual leader. His belief in and practice of nonviolent civil disobedience as a path to social justice has influenced and inspired civil rights activists throughout the world. *What change do you want to see in the world?*

SPAWN TALK by Abigail Garner

DIVORCE: LEAVE IT TO THE GROWN-UPS

I was five when my father left our house and moved into Russ' house just a couple miles away. The following year, I was put in a support group at school for children whose parents were divorcing. It seemed that the facilitator's goal was to make sure we walked away with one concept: "It's not your fault."

It hadn't even occurred to me that the divorce was "my fault." I knew I had nothing to do with it. And, to the best of my memory, my father's departure from our home was a relief. As an out gay man, my father was able to put the energy he needed into being our Dad instead of wasting his energy hiding his true self from us. My closeted father was a distant, unpredictable, emotional time bomb. When he came out, he became whole.

At group, we watched these special educational films with bad acting and even worse scripts. The scripts typically involved kids trying to talk their parents into getting back together and the kids being reassured that it wasn't their fault.

If it was normal for kids to think divorce was their fault, I wondered, was I normal? I worried that the facilitator, as well as my mother - a child development specialist - would notice that I didn't think it was my fault and they would conclude that I was abnormal. Between feeling emotionally abnormal and feeling hesitant to talk about the real reason for the divorce, there wasn't much I could say in group.

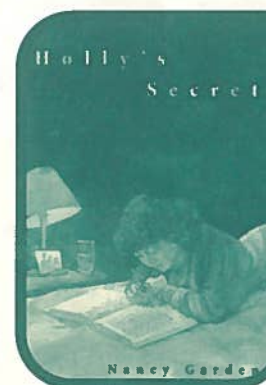
I know that some young kids wonder if they had anything to do with their parents' break-up, so "it's not your fault" is an important message to share with them. The message that would have been more helpful for me, however, would have been, "it's not your responsibility."

My anxiety about the break-up was not about the actual divorce, but about all the issues that arose as a result of the divorce. I wish I would have known that it was not my responsibility to worry about how the heating bills were going to get paid since there were now two households to maintain. I wish I would have known that it was not my responsibility to smooth out tensions between my mother and my Russ. I wish I would have known that it was not my responsibility to protect my family from the big bad world that might do who-knows-what after finding out my daddy is gay.

When parents break up - whether they are same-sex or opposite sex - it is an issue between the parents. Divorce is for the grown-ups to figure out, but unfortunately we, as their children, often become wrapped up in it. Divorce is never a child's fault. What's more, the difficulties that arise as a result of the divorce are also the responsibilities of the grown-ups, not their children.

That is what I wish someone had told me that when I was six, because it took me a long time to figure out on my own. And sometimes - even 23 years later - I still have to remind myself. ■

Abigail Garner, 29, lives in Minneapolis. She is the creator of a website for LGBT families: www.familieslikemine.com.



HOLLY'S SECRET

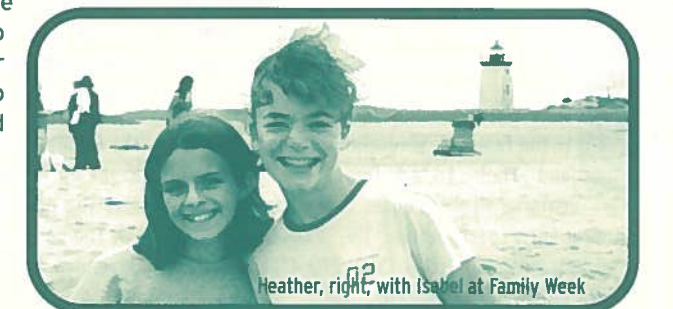
by Nancy Garden
book review

By Heather Estan

Have you ever had the feeling you have to hide your family for who they are? Then this book is for you. It's about a 12 year old girl named Holly, who along with her two moms and brother moves to a small town in Massachusetts. Holly is now faced with the problem of telling her new friends about her family. When she meets new friends, she comes up with a "plan" to reinvent herself, including not telling her friends about her moms. When Holly gets in a tangled mess of lies with friends, she now has to deal with telling them the truth.

This book was written very well: It is for the age group of 10 to 12 year olds. The author realizes that coming out to friends is a difficult thing. The characters in this book are very easy to relate to and they make you feel like this is your happening life. Will Holly lose her friends because she has two moms? I suggest that anyone who has ever faced this problem read *Holly's Secret*.

Heather Estan, 14, Westfield, MA, is the COLAGE West Mass Chapter Coordinator. She lives with her lesbian mom, sister Sara, and her dog Molly. Heather enjoys reading, playing lacrosse, and swimming in her free time. To contact her email westmass@colage.org. ■



WHAT YOU CAN DO - MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN

PARENTS BREAKING UP? KNOW YOUR "RIGHTS"!

When parents break up, on top of everything else, you may feel totally powerless. Even adult "children" often feel shaken, worried, and confused about their roles and responsibilities. During this period of difficult transition, you may feel the need to speak up for yourself in order to get the information and support you need. This "Bill of Rights" outlines just a few things that you can expect - even when your whole world is changing.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT...

To the truth...
Parents sometimes think they're doing their kids a favor by hiding or avoiding the bad news. But most COLAGERS say that they really prefer to be informed of the changes that are happening. They may be looking for a way to "break it to you". Tell them that you know that something's going on, and that you can handle the truth.

...and to say when you've heard enough.

There is such a thing as TOO MUCH SHARING! Sometimes, under the stress of a breakup, parents turn to their children for support that is more appropriate for other family members or friends to give. If you don't want to hear the intimate details of your parents' relationship problems, feel free to say so. You may have to tell them this more than once!

To remain neutral.

You may feel pressured to take the side of one parent against another one. No matter who is pressuring you or what their reasons are, you don't have to give in to it. Tell them that you care about them equally -- and to CUT IT OUT! Eventually, this kind of pressure usually subsides when everyone becomes more comfortable in their new roles and relationships.

To maintain relationships with any and all of your parents.

In a perfect world, parents and partners would never try to hurt each other by denying each other access to children they've helped to raise. But sadly, this does sometimes happen. If you feel that you're being denied the opportunity to see or speak to an important person in your life, SPEAK UP. If the situation doesn't get better, GET HELP from a trusted ally, like a family member, teacher, or counselor that can help moderate between you and your parents.

The same applies if there's someone that you absolutely do not want to see. If a parent, partner, or ex-partner makes you feel unsafe - again, GET HELP!

To feel angry, sad, confused, hurt, relieved...and however else you want to feel.

Everyone deals with loss and change in the family differently. There's no "right" or "wrong" way to cope with parents' coming out, divorce, or breakups. Your parents may be initiating the change, but it affects you on many levels. You have the right to your own feelings and thoughts about it.

To be heard.

They can't know how you feel if you don't tell them. You can write it in a letter, you can yell it out loud. You can say it through tears or giggles. You can tell them on the phone or via e-mail. Whatever you do, don't try to hide your feelings from your family. Any expression is better than no expression at all. Tip: sometimes the best way to get yourself heard is to start out by listening.

To reach out for support.

Your issues are different than your parents' issues. If a parent is coming out for the first time, they may have a sense of freedom. But you may feel confused, embarrassed, and helpless. Perhaps

your parent is relieved to be ending their relationship, but you aren't welcoming the change at all. Or maybe you just need help dealing with your parents' weird behavior! You need support for what you are going through. Don't be afraid or ashamed to seek whatever support you need for yourself. (See "Resources" for suggestions).

To develop relationships with your parents' new partners at your own pace.

Your parents might be very enthusiastic about their new relationships. Trouble is, they want you to share their enthusiasm. It's perfectly OK for you to warm up to these new folks on your terms, on your own time. Give them a fair chance - but you certainly don't have to become a new family overnight. (You may have already noticed -- this isn't the Brady Bunch!).

To be a "kid".

While we're still very young, divorces and breakups can introduce us to new, very adult issues. Sexual orientation, relationship conflicts, and new responsibilities are just a few. If you still live at home, you may feel pressured to become an "instant adult". If you are an adult, you may feel like you have to drop everything to take care of your parents and/or siblings.

Even if your role in your family changes, you don't have to grow up overnight, and you don't have to give up your own life. Stay involved as much as you can in your own activities, like school, arts, or sports. Most importantly, no matter what age you are, don't let go of your dreams for yourself. ■

Just For Us Co-Coordinator Rosanne Johnson, age 30, lives in San Francisco. Her parents have been divorced since she was 8.



DIVORCE AND BREAKUP RESOURCES FOR YOUTH AND PARENTS

Other Side of the Closet: The Coming-out Crisis for Straight Spouses and Families addresses the coming out process of one, or more, parent. Amity Pierce-Buxton. John Wiley and Sons Inc., New York NY (1991)

In the Family A 'Magazine for Queer People and Their Loved Ones' that features material all about queer family issues from a therapeutic perspective. ITF, P.O. Box 5387, Takoma Park, MD 20913 (301) 270-4771 Website: <http://www.inthefamily.com>

Out of the Ordinary: Essays on Growing Up with Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Parents - A collection of personal stories, many are about divorce and partner separation. (ed.) Noelle Howey and Ellen Samuels. St. Martins Press, New York, NY (2000)

My Family's Changing : A First Look at Family Break Up - A great picture book about divorce but also the pain that comes with family break up. Pat Thomas, Lesley Harker (Illustrator.) Barron's Juveniles, New York, NY (1999)

Lesbian Step Families : An Ethnography of Love - Explores the issues around adjusting to step-parents in a queer family. Janet M. Wright. Harrington Park Press. Binhampton, NY (1998)

Protecting Families: Standards for Child Custody in Same-Sex Relationships A guide for avoiding or managing same-sex custody disputes created by community members, for community members. Published by GLAD, NCLR, Lambda Legal, Family Pride, and COLAGE (2000). Available from any of those groups in print and on-line at: www.colage.org/parents/index.html.

Dear Friend,
As COLAGE continues to try and improve our services and programs, **we need your help.** Please take a few minutes to complete this short questionnaire and let us know what you think about COLAGE and what you want from COLAGE. Your honest feedback will be invaluable in our efforts to ensure that we are doing the best job we can for you and all of the people we work with.

This survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and all of your responses will be kept strictly confidential. No one will contact you as a result of your participation in this survey.

If you would prefer, **you can complete this survey online.** You will find the "member survey" on the COLAGE Web site <colage.org>. If there are others in your house that would like to complete this survey, they can fill it out online or call us at 415- 861-5437 for more copies.

Thank you,
Felicia Park-Rogers
Executive Director, COLAGE

If you are a young COLAGER, you may want a parent to help you with this survey.

To complete this survey, simply mark the circle or box that best fits your answer.

Circles are used when you should choose just one answer and boxes are used where you can select more than one answer.

First, about how often do you access COLAGE or use COLAGE services?
Please select one.

- Once a week or more About once a month Once a year
 A few times a month A few times a year

When you think of COLAGE, what age groups do you think we serve?
Please select all that apply.

- Children under 5 19 - 25 year olds
 5 - 12 year olds People 26 years old or older
 13 - 18 year olds

How much do you think COLAGE should be serving the people in the following age groups?
Please select one answer for each age group.

	A Lot	A Little	Not at all
Children under 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 - 12 year olds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13-18 year olds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19-25 year olds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People 26 years old or older	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

And how important is it to you that COLAGE do the following educational activities?
Please select one answer from 0 to 10 for each activity.

	Not at all Important										Extremely Important				
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10				
Maintain the COLAGE Web site	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Work with researchers who are studying COLAGE-related issues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Develop and distribute educational videos to schools	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Develop and distribute educational booklets and resource/fact packets to schools	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Develop and distribute resource/fact packets to the media/press	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Help schools establish clubs like GSAs (Gay Straight Alliance)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Provide interviews for radio, t.v., newspapers, and magazines	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Make public speeches and presentations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

What else should COLAGE be doing?
Please write your answer below.

How would you rate the job that COLAGE is doing in the following areas?
Please select one answer for each item.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Don't Know
Providing social support/fostering a sense of community for members.....	0	0	0	0	0	0
Advocating for the rights of members and their families	0	0	0	0	0	0
Developing and participating in educational programs	0	0	0	0	0	0

Which of these COLAGE services have you used? Why haven't you used the others?
Please check all of the services or activities that you have used in the past.
For the ones that you have not used, please select the main reason you have not used it.

	I Have Used It	I Have Not Used it		
		I Didn't Know About it	I Don't Have Access to it	It is not Relevant to Me
Local support group	0	0	0	0
"Just For Us" newsletter	0	0	0	0
Kids Club (for children under 12)	0	0	0	0
COLAGE Connections pen pal program.....	0	0	0	0
E-mail discussion group	0	0	0	0
COLAGE Web site (www.colage.org)	0	0	0	0
Family Week (Provincetown, MA or Saugatuck, MI)	0	0	0	0
COLAGE NetNews.....	0	0	0	0
National gatherings (like the 2000 March on Washington)	0	0	0	0
COLAGE sponsored letter writing or telephone campaigns	0	0	0	0
Personally testifying in your state on behalf of LGBT family issues	0	0	0	0
Personally providing interviews to the media	0	0	0	0

How useful were the services that you have used?
Please rate only the services that you selected in the previous question.

	Not at all Useful	Not Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Very Useful	Extremely Useful
Local support group	0	0	0	0	0
"Just For Us" newsletter	0	0	0	0	0
Kids Club (for children under 12)	0	0	0	0	0
COLAGE Connections pen pal program.....	0	0	0	0	0
E-mail discussion group	0	0	0	0	0
COLAGE Web site (www.colage.org)	0	0	0	0	0
Family Week (Provincetown, MA or Saugatuck, MI)	0	0	0	0	0
COLAGE NetNews.....	0	0	0	0	0
National gatherings (like the 2000 March on Washington)	0	0	0	0	0

Many organizations like COLAGE have membership dues that allow those who can afford to, to make an annual contribution to support the non-profit organization. If COLAGE were to do this, what do you think the base-level membership dues should be?

Please enter dollar amounts.

\$ _____ per year for a family

\$ _____ per year for an individual

The following questions will help us understand who uses COLAGE. Please remember all of your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

How old are you? _____ years

If COLAGE had a youth advisory board, would you be interested in serving on it?
Please select one.

- Yes No I am not a "youth"

Which of the following best describes the area that you live in?
Please select one.

- Urban Suburban Rural

Are you a . . .
Please select all that apply

- COLAGEr (Child of a LGBT person) Not a COLAGEr or parent, just a supporter
 Parent of a COLAGEr

Are you . . .
Please select one.

- Female Male Transgender
 MTF FTM Other _____

Are you . . .
Please select all that apply

- Bisexual Lesbian/Gay Straight Questioning Don't know yet

Is your LGBT parent(s) . . .
Please select all that apply

- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender

Who is the COLAGEr in your family? Is she/he someone who was . . .
Please select one.

- Adopted Child from a previous marriage
 Child from known donor insemination Child from anonymous donor insemination
 Other _____

With which race do you most closely identify?
Please select one.

- Asian / Pacific Islander Black / African American Hispanic / Latino Native American
 White / European Mixed Heritage Other _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

To return your completed survey please mail it to:
COLAGE
3543 18th St #1
San Francisco, CA 94110

Or you can Fax it to:
415-255-8345

2nd Generation

A SPECIAL SECTION FOR QUEER AND QUESTIONING KIDS OF LGBT PARENTS

COMING OUT FROM NOWHERE

BY MOLLY VAN AVERY



I never really came out from anywhere. In my family you're going against the norm by dating someone of the opposite sex. Our motto could be, "If you're not gay yet, just wait a few years!" When I was two years old my dad came out. My parents divorced. Memories of the two of them together, tan, young and happy are pasted inside old photo albums. The past I hold is more blurry, dotted with stranger visions like liberal Midwestern moms voting for the sensitive silver haired, new age single gay father PTA parent of the year. My father. I see him in our kitchen alone but laughing at the faces my sister and I make after he admits that Kevin Costner is his handsome fairy prince.

I also see my mom with her friends who are women but look at her for long, serious, piercing moments. As I grow older I register these awkward memories as women who came into my mother's life before she was ready and left for reasons I could not understand at the time. Because I was a teenager my method for unpacking uncomfortable information from its cramped up storage was teasing. Which I did, shamelessly. I sent her a postcard from camp the summer before she came out that read, "I can see it now, 'LESBIAN' in lights. How's it going?" She wrote back about the weather. The past three years have been a blossoming for her. These days she wears a black leather jacket, drives a maroon Rav 4 and goes on Olivia cruises with her partner all the way to Lesbos, Greece.

My sister was always the sure fire heterosexual of the family until last year. She quit Banana Republic, bought a red Chevy truck, moved from San Francisco to Vermont, found work at a non-profit arts organization and started dating a woman for the first time. The oldest daughter, my sister, our perfect femme, came home for Christmas to pats on the back from my two moms who raised their eyebrows, giggled and whispered, "Now you'll understand our jokes!"

Having at least one gay parent my whole life was interesting enough to other people to divert them from inquiring about my own personal preference. I developed a private "They don't ask, I can't tell" policy. As long as other people didn't care enough to ask, why the hell should I? Embarking on the journey towards sexual self-awareness would be like volunteering to sort through two month old compost to see if any tea wrappers were still intact.

I was perfectly content avoiding clarity and was more than happy to preach to anyone about the meaninglessness of labels. My blissful and blatant disregard did not last. At age 17, I was disrupted. My friend roped me into being a token teen for a section of "Dyke Night", a sold-out annual performance at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis. "You like to write, right? And you act, it'll just be like combining the two in front of an audience." It was such an innocent proposition. I did love to write, I didn't mind the stage, spotlights, or a crowd. I accepted.

At our first meeting we sat in a circle on the grass of the sculpture garden and introduced ourselves. I mean, this was a serious collection of real life dykes who, at my

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DATELINE DAN

By Dan Cherubin

Well, in our last installment, I talked about the basic start-up history of the Second Generation "movement" (Boy, how old does that make me feel, starting a movement?). This time I'd like to talk about some of the issues that we SGers faced, as a group in the larger LGBT community, and as individuals.

Part of the Crowd? I have often said that I bristle when LGBT parents groups talk about how their families are "just like everyone else." That is untrue. Everyone else in the world DOESN'T have a LGBT parent. Everyone else DOESN'T have to worry what friends, schoolmates, neighbors think. Everyone else DOESN'T have to try to prove that having a gay parent doesn't make you gay.

Bing! That's the biggest issue SG faced right from the beginning. With all these LGBT parents groups claiming, "See? Our kids grow up STRAIGHT!" there was a bunch of us behind them going "Yo! What about us?" Many other groups tried to deny we existed, as if our mere presence proved every right-wing conservative's worst fears. Did they not realize how hurtful that could be? Which leads us to a related issue....

Don't stand so close to me! The early appearances of SG at LGBT community events, such as Pride Marches, fundraisers, Family Days and the like, were treated as if a group of ebola-carrying lepers disembarked at a banquet. People were TERRIFIED of us! Like our group might make other children of LGBTs queer! For all the talk about how "sexuality isn't a choice", we were treated as if we made the wrong choice!

This often led to us being asked to leave media events or to not talk to reporters. This was a hard pill to swallow. LGBT folk may spend most of their lives being censored or denied their chance to speak out. And here was much of the LGBT community telling us they didn't want the more "unfavorable message" being told to the world at large.

What do you call yourself? Another big issue was how exactly to describe SG without giving people a coronary. Saying "Gay kids" made people uncomfortable, like this meant we were all under the age of 12.



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age had already kissed girls in drunken stupors more than once or had their tires slashed in the parking lot of their suburban school for plastering their car with rainbow bumper stickers in the shape of Minnesota, a heart, a fist, a dog, and so on. One of them wore a stoic expression, a black leather vest, and a black leather beret that she decorated with a rainbow pin strategically placed in the middle of her forehead. The girl next to her was straight off the rugby pitch and as big as I imagined Snuffalofagus would be in real life. She had a deep voice and was writing a novel. Next up was the hottest chick there who carefully "barely" managed her totally stylish spiky black hair. This girl was witty. When her grandma asked her what dyke night was all about she goes, "Oh, it's a fundraiser for flood victims, Grams." She actually made out with a girl once in the hallway of public school. Damn. Then there was my friend who brought me there in the first place. She had been out as long as I'd known her and was deep in the middle of a two year relationship. At that point, all I had was a gay dad and every single Indigo Girls album.

It was finally my turn to talk so I said, "I'm Molly and I guess I just follow love regardless of the gender. I mean, it doesn't really matter if they're a guy or a girl as long as we share a deep meaningful, inner connection." Hot and spiky mumbled, "oh, one of those" under her breath. But I heard her. Every other day I told myself I was beyond definition but that day, all I had was a plain colored tee shirt, tennis shoes, short hair and glasses. I didn't have definition. No leather, no muscles, no girlfriend or boyfriend, no idea of how to fit into everyone else's categories.

For years I straddled to the borders of both sexes scared as hell of falling head first into the great divide. But, the truth, my truth- -bisexuality is boring. Clinging to the edge zones means missing the culture in the middle of the country. After all, what is a nomad without a tribe? Never satisfied, always hungry, and always foraging.

I fell in love with my best friend. I dated a bald-headed girl who owned a tie rack and several sets of sterling silver cuff links. I was dumped by a basketball star. Now, I dance like a maniac, move my hips, wear tight pants, throw darts that ricochet off the back wall and land on the sticky floor at gay bars. I look for women. I look at women. I am moved by the female form.

So I did come out of somewhere. It just wasn't a closet. It was more like an efficiency apartment. No closets, no walls, just way too much undefined space for me, Molly Van Avery, a lesbian, to fill. ■

When Molly Van Avery is not hanging out with her 100% post nuclear queer family in Minneapolis, she can be found farming in the city along side a rowdy bunch of kids with dirt on their hands and tomato juice on their chins.

Rob continued from page 1

we chased her through the grass, fleet of foot and cruel of heart. The breeze caressed our faces and the sun burned brightly upon us. In winter, as the snow piled up in drifts and pattered down onto our outreached tongues, we threw stinging snowballs and cackled with glee. Throughout the seasons, however, our taunts remained the same. Amid shouts of "Lezzie's lost," and "Poor little lezbo with no place to go," she fled, hot tears dripping down her face, every word piercing her fragile self-esteem.

Subtlety had never been my mother's forté, and thus she stated quite soon after the divorce that if she "had another relationship it would be with a woman." It was through Rivka, and our treatment of her, that I began to understand the implications of my mother's revelation. It wasn't as if we, as fifth grade boys, understood the meaning behind the words we used as insults. One of us had probably heard them from an older sibling. The very fact that we used them at all,

however, assisted me in understanding the immense stigma associated with homosexuality. At our age, we were simply conduits for societal homophobia, but it shocked me nonetheless. This was, one of the pivotal moments in my life. Needless to say, I immediately stopped teasing Rivka, and my friends soon lost interest too. More importantly though, from that point on, it became very important to me to surround myself with friends who accepted and understood the fact that my mom was a lesbian. I never wanted to be forced to conceal anything, and I think that led me to some of the best friendships I could ever have hoped for.

I didn't get along very well with my mom's first partner, but her second one, Linda, who lived with us for several years, is still good friends with my sister and I. My mom's current partner, Pat, is living with us now, along with her dog, our dog, and our two obese

(People often asked if I was guardian of the group!) We tried a whole lot of variations, and were truly shocked when told by some that they felt they COULDN'T join because they were still questioning their own sexuality and joining SG would have made it a distinct decision. So, to make it a short description we now say "Queer and Questioning Kids of LGBT parents".

I personally like that terminology. Aside from shortening the length of the sentence, the word "queer" does have a more generational and universal utility. Being queer doesn't always make you gay. And vice versa. It gave us a more decisive position: as queers, as kids, as part of the community.

Fill that niche! Like any group of kids, SGers come from all backgrounds. Some of us grew up in "traditional" households but one (or both) of our parents came out later. Others were raised in LGBT homes with open parents. We even had one member raised on a lesbian commune! A veritable tapestry of lives. But often the times we did get noticed by the media, they only wanted specific tales and even then they wanted them to be sordid. "My mom forced me into a life of homosexuality!" THIS was not why we were here!

These types of incidents are EXACTLY what kept me running this group. For every obstacle out there, I knew that some SGER felt slighted, all alone, kept out of the very community supposedly helping us.

And that's why you'll always see a SG article in this newsletter, by me or others. We are part of the group, we are part of your lives and we're not going anywhere soon. ■

Dan Cherubin is a gay guy with 3 moms and a wrestling cat. He has been described as "the coolest librarian in NYC," "a gay parent's worst nightmare," and "a tattooed SG icon."

cats. As a senior in high school, I feel like I have nothing to hide. I'm very open, and all of my friends know my mom's sexual orientation.

For those with parents divorcing or divorced because one parent is gay, I would say the most important thing is to communicate with your parents. I learned only long after the divorce how much resentment my father had buried within himself. When my mother came out to him before they split up, his first reaction was to say "No, you're not." Divorces that occur in this type of situation can be especially hard on both parents. Stay open, remember that your parents are people too, with emotions of their own, and most of all, talk to them about your feelings. ■

Rob DeVoogd of Ithaca, New York, is graduating from high school this June. After visiting Bolivia this summer, he will be starting Swarthmore College in the fall.

COLAGE KIDS CLUB

FUN PAGES

for kids with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents

Special Pull-Out Section For Younger Members



I AM STRONG By Heather Zeigler, 9, Chambersbug, PA

You may hurt me with your words,
Maybe leave some cuts and scrapes.
But when you will laugh at me,
I'll pull down the drapes.
You may think your perfect,
and that I'm a freak.
But one thing you should know is that,
I am strong and you are weak.

You may think it's okay to tease me,
because you think that I'm not real.
But there's one thing your not thinking,
and that is how I feel.
Hopefully someday you'll realize,
what you didn't seek.
That thing you didn't realize is,
I am strong and you are weak.

MEET OLIVIA



Olivia with her mother's partner Zythra

Hi. Let me introduce myself. My name is Olivia Woods, I'm 10 years old, and after 6 years of feeling different, alone, depressed, unloved and unwanted, I'm finally beginning to live with my parents' divorce.

Now I realize that I was never any of the above. In fact, I was more loved. More wanted. My parents split up so I could grow up in the healthiest environment possible; No fighting, hating, etc. etc. And I'm no different than any other human being. Everyone has problems, many much worse than mine. And I am DEFINITELY not alone. More than half of the nations' kids have divorced, trans, bi, or gay parents. Look at COLAGE. It's thriving!

There are a few ways I have come to live with divorce. Firstly, I realized that being depressed and sulking about it wasn't helping anything. In fact, since I hated divorce so much, why even think about it? So I started to search around, looking for ways to distract myself from it. For me, music, writing, and horseback riding were the best. With music and writing, I not only feel I've accomplished something when I learn a tune or finish a page, but I am drawn into the music or story in the process. With horseback riding, the feeling of excitement in my chest leaves no room for depression.

You'll notice that I don't use the term "Broken home" instead of "Divorced". That's because I need to save that

expression for all the homes where the parents fight or abuse each other. Divorced parents do not mean a broken home. They mean a healthier home. It's like being a vegetarian (I am). It's healthier. There are problems linked with it (lack of protein, etc.), but for the most part, it's better.

Divorce is hard, but I am slowly learning to live with it. I have found ways to express my feelings, which help me not to feel depressed. Of course, some people have to look harder than others for this realization. For instance, I had to find some grown-up friends who I could trust with my problems, because I don't have any brothers or sisters to talk to. I think that the most important thing that I learned from talking to people is this: the more self-esteem and self-respect you have, the better you'll feel. When I had those, whenever I had a bad thought about anything I just took a look at myself and said: You are a great person. You don't have to think these thoughts. You're better than that. And what I say to myself is true. I am a great person. I don't have to think these thoughts. I am better than that.

Now I split my time equally between my parents (Thursday - Sunday with dad, Monday - Wednesday with mom), write and play my hammered dulcimer daily, talk to some adult friends about my problems weekly, and go horseback riding monthly. And you know what? I'm finally happy!

COLAGER Olivia Woods lives in New Hampshire.

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

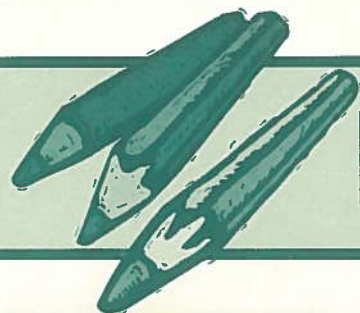
WANTA PEN PAL?

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

COLAGE NOTES



WELCOME SUMMER INTERNS

Caitlin Bailey, 18, of San Geronimo, CA, joins COLAGE after her first year at Hampshire College in Amherst, MA. She has a lesbian mom, straight dad, brother, two step-moms, and a step-sister. Caitlin enjoys doing activism through art, especially painting, collage, murals, and graffiti. She hopes to learn more about grassroots organizing in the queer family movement through her internship this summer.

Megan Brown, 21, of Princeton Junction, NJ, comes to us with three years of social justice organizing experience at Juniata College in Pennsylvania. She has a brother and mom in NJ and a wonderful girlfriend who she will be spending the summer with in the Bay Area. Megan spends her free time dancing and writing.

She is especially looking forward to working with families and building upon her organizing skills.

We are looking forward to having both of these talented interns join the COLAGE staff at our headquarters this summer. Welcome Caitlin and Megan!



Caitlin, Intern

JOIN COLAGE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Do you wish that COLAGE could do even more to make the world a better place for all of us? So do we! We could use your help. If you are interested in helping with COLAGE's fundraising efforts to make it possible for us to do our important work, please call or write Felicia (415-861-5437, ext 101, director@colage.org)

CATHY SAKIMURA JOINS COLAGE STAFF



Cathy, our new Program Associate!

Cathy Sakimura, 21, started full time at COLAGE on July 2, shortly after finishing her undergraduate degree in Studio Art with a minor in Communication at Stanford University. Cathy's many activist activities at Stanford included coordinating the LGBT Speakers Bureau, serving as editor of Masque magazine—a journal of queer expression, and interning for the Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula.

Among her many responsibilities as the Program Associate, Cathy will be focusing on constituent resources, information, and referrals, after-school program development, and support and advocacy for people with LGBT parents in the Bay Area.

Cathy is devoted to COLAGE's fight for the equality of all families and is enthusiastic about working with youth and the LGBT community. You can contact Cathy at 415-861-5437, ext 103 or by email, cathy@colage.org.

With generous support from the San Francisco Foundation and other funders COLAGE has expanded our staff with the creation of the new position of Program Associate.

BECOME A COLAGE LEADER - JOIN THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

Would you like to have a say in what COLAGE does, who we serve, and what values we share and teach? Can you see yourself as an ambassador to the world on behalf of children with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents? Would you enjoy discovering new resources and ways to help reach and support new and old COLAGE members? Finally, do you like to learn new things, meet new people and have fun?

You could do all of this -- and more -- by becoming a member of COLAGE's national Board of Directors. The COLAGE Board is an amazing multi-age, multi-ethnic, multi-talented group of people who are passionately committed to COLAGE's mission. We meet in-person twice a year and by phone every six weeks. We work with staff, volunteers, COLAGE program participants, and our friends and allies to make sure COLAGE survives and thrives. We learn from and teach each other about communication, teamwork, and leadership while playing games, making collages, and bringing about social change for our families.

COLAGE needs motivated youth and adults to help guide our organization in providing advocacy, education, and support for children of LGBT parents.

If you would like more information about joining the COLAGE Board of Directors, please contact the COLAGE office today! Call 415-861-5437 or e-mail director@colage.org.

REACH OUT AND TOUCH COLAGE

We've all called a number and gotten stuck in voicemail hell. Well, guess what?! Now you can call COLAGE and check out our new voicemail heaven. Each staff person has his or her own private voicemail for you to leave messages, there is a regularly updated list of events happening nationwide, and a description of COLAGE's programs and services. So come on, give us a call, our automated voicemail attendant is eagerly waiting to hear from you!

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