



# Just for Us

The newsletter for daughters and sons of lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender parents from Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere



## Season's Greetings

This issue of the COLAGE newsletter is a new format which includes the FunPages, previously a separate publication for younger kids. By combining our newsletters, we can reach more people with more fun and info more regularly.

**Special Announcement from Mike Beebe, COLAGE Steering Committee Chair:** We have some bittersweet news to announce. Sadly for us, Stefan Lynch, Director of COLAGE for three years, is leaving December 31, 1996 to pursue new goals. We can't begin to thank him enough for the vision, leadership, and commitment he has so generously shared with us for the past three years. Stefan has touched many lives through COLAGE with his humor and good sense. We wish him all the best in his new pursuits. We will miss him dearly.

### Contact Info

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Erika Simon Just for Us Editor  
Vicky Snyder &  
Stefan Lynch Layout/Design

- Kids Club pull-out section with a special focus on AIDS
- *Diver Greg Louganis*: interviewed by a 12 year-old fan
- *Exclusive to Just For Us*: Scholarships for COLAGERS

## Tales from a Multifunctional Family by Alison Wearing

My father and stepmother have been together for 13 years. They met, ahem, in a bar. My father spotted my stepmother, plopped himself on the next bar stool and opened with the line, "so...what have you been up to tonight?" Miraculously, a conversation ensued. They spent the rest of the evening talking about opera.

It was more than anyone was ready for. Most of his immediate family disowned him—apparently they'd rather see him a miserable hetero than a jubilant homo—and everyone else took a giant step back. There were a lot of hushed tones around the neighbourhood. Pitying stares from the neighbours. The tele-

"my stepmother is actually more of a fairy stepmother, if you know what I mean"

The next morning, my stepmother handed my father a telephone number and said, "Now CALL ME."

A year later, they moved in together. Now they have two dogs and a subscription to *Opera* magazine. But they're not your average couple. They're both fulfilled. In fact, they have the sort of relationship I admire. They are two distinct individuals, who are in each other's company simply because they adore it.

They're also not your average couple, because they're both men. Which means that my stepmother is actually more of a fairy stepmother, if you know what I mean.

My father "came out" in the late seven-

phone went silent. Dinner parties stopped. I felt like our house had been quarantined.

I was 13 when I was told, "Your father loves men." Having grown up in a small town in Southern Ontario, I was unprepared for this news. I thought it meant that my father loved my brothers and not me. But that didn't last long. You'd be surprised how quickly kids can figure things out.

I spent the rest of my teen-age years learning how to be a good liar. I came up with creative answers to questions about my parents' divorce and about the man he lived with. I even remember telling someone that my father used that funny "s" when he spoke because he had just

*continued on page 3 "Multifunctional Family"*

**Kids Club FunPages - pull out center 4 sheets**

## COLAGE Groups

For new groups, groups starting, or to COLAGE office.  
Start a group in your area, contact the

<b>NEW YORK</b>	Pat and Shannon Alfred-Keating Kids Club South Bay 2108 Pheasant Lane Redondo Beach, CA 90278 (310) 214-1612
<b>MINNESOTA</b>	Emily Schbner COLAGE/The Bridge 2200 Emerson Avenue, South Minneapolis, MN 55405 (612) 377-8800
<b>TEXAS</b>	Liz Haas COLAGE/Bay Area Groups 2300 Market St. #165 San Francisco, CA 94114 (415) 861-5437
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>	Anna Heller JFU Boston 11 Lovell St. #2 Somerville, MA 02144 (617) 628-3251
<b>ARIZONA</b>	Tara Rose JFU-LA USC Dept. of Psychology Mail Code 1061 Los Angeles, CA 90089-1061 (213) 9-Family
<b>CALIFORNIA</b>	Mary Schaffer/Sarah Davies Boulder COLAGE UMC 207 Boulder, CO 80309 (303) 447-9532
<b>ARIZONA</b>	Bobbi Furer Denver PFLAG/Kid's Group 320 South Newport Way Denver, CO 80224 (303) 388-8611
<b>COLORADO</b>	Olivia Hicks Older Kids Rap Group 141 Columbia Heights, #3C New York, NY 11201 (718) 875-8958
<b>OREGON</b>	Love Makes a Family Bonnie Tinker PO Box 11694 Portland, OR 97211 (503) 228-3892
<b>WASHINGTON DC</b>	Jim Hubbs GFC/COLAGE PO Box 19891 Washington, DC 20036 (301) 596-1838
<b>WASHINGTON DC</b>	Scott Askew PFLAG Olympia (has a kids group) PO Box 6123 Olympia, WA 98502 (212) 673-2926
<b>WASHINGTON DC</b>	Dan Cherubin Second Generation 57 Second Ave., Apt. 51 New York, NY 10003 (212) 673-2926
<b>WASHINGTON DC</b>	Mike Beebe (COLAGE Seattle) (206) 325-4449
<b>WASHINGTON DC</b>	Older Kids Rap Group Seattle, WA 98109 (206) 281-6226
<b>WASHINGTON DC</b>	411 Boston St. Seattle, WA 98109 (206) 281-6226
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**Inside: Greg Louganis!**



**COLAGE**  
2300 Market Street #165  
San Francisco, CA 94114

A Project of GLPCI

Watch your mail!  
1997 Renewal Notices will  
be sent to all members  
soon. Be sure to renew your  
support of COLAGE's work.

For more information on starting a COLAGE Group in your area, contact COLAGE at (415) 861-5437, or send \$5 to:  
COLAGE  
2300 Market #165  
San Francisco, CA  
94114

New Options Middle School  
Jeanette Silva  
WASHINGTON  
(713) 666-8256  
Houston, TX 77025-4616  
4122 Sarong Dr.  
JFU Houston  
Ray Williams  
MINNESOTA  
(617) 628-3251  
Somerville, MA 02144  
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JFU Boston  
Anna Heller  
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(213) 9-Family  
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(206) 281-6226



## Letters to COLAGE

Dear People,  
I got your address from the internet. I live with my mum and her partner Sue. I have been aware for some time that my kind of family is inferior in the eyes of many. I was very interested to read about COLAGE as I have never come across a U.K. equivalent. I would be very grateful if you could give my address to anyone interested in writing the old fashioned way to an English girl! I am 17, I've got three younger siblings, I like the group Oasis, the TV show Absolutely Fabulous, and **letters!** I hope somebody writes back, I'll reply to everyone!  
Thanks a lot,

- Lily Spencer, Sheffield, England

Dear Lily,

It is great to hear from you. There aren't any organizations like COLAGE in the UK, but there are ways to meet folks. You should contact "Happy Families" PO Box 1060, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN6 9QE. 01302 702601. You can also contact Anne Blackburne of the Lesbian Parenting Group in London 0171 249 9951. Also, look for a new book of interviews with folks with gay parents coming soon from Cassel; the author is Lisa Saffron.

Anybody who wants to write to Lily should call or write the COLAGE office and we'll get you in touch with her. Editors

A Proud Son...

Dear COLAGE,  
My name is Corey, and I have two moms. I'm 17 years old, "straight," and I've been "out" to my moms since grade school. They are very active in my high school band parent organization and are wholeheartedly accepted by the other kids and parents. So am I, even though we live in a conservative area. It's true, Love is all it takes to make a family, and I've been blessed with the best. I'm very proud of my two moms for never hiding, and of my dad for accepting and supporting us all the way he has.  
Sincerely,

- Corey, Beaverton, OR

PS I know the key to "coming out" successfully and would be glad to help other kids on line.

Dear Corey,

Sounds like you are doing cool stuff in Beaverton. Way to go! Any one want to e-mail Corey for the secrets to his success? Contact the office and we'll give you his e-mail address.

Anybody Else Out There?

Dear COLAGE,  
First of all, thanks so much for replying [to my earlier email]. In the past, I have been sad that no kids of lesbians live in my area, and all kids

are very ignorant towards the topic. It's taboo where I live. I would definitely love to meet kids of lesbians. Two years ago I went to a summer camp called Mountain Meadow, which is a camp for children of lesbians, biracial, and single parent families. We had daily meetings and had some really good discussions about what we had in common. I am also ashamed to admit that in the past I have tried to hide my mother's lifestyle from my friends, and have been very selective about who I choose to tell. Right now, there is a suncatcher with a rainbow and a pink triangle hanging on our front door, but so far, no one has given us much of a problem. If you could, please connect me with other kids of lesbians. It would feel good to have friends/ boyfriends who are aware and don't have a problem with it. Thank you so much,

- Kate, age 14, Woodstown, NJ

Dear Kate,

Thanks for writing. Have you heard about the COLAGE conference? This summer it will be in Philadelphia July 24-27. It is always a good time

with about 100 kids of lesbian parents (you can bring your parents too if you want) spending bonding time talking about our issues and also having plain ol' fun.

COLAGE Kids Club!

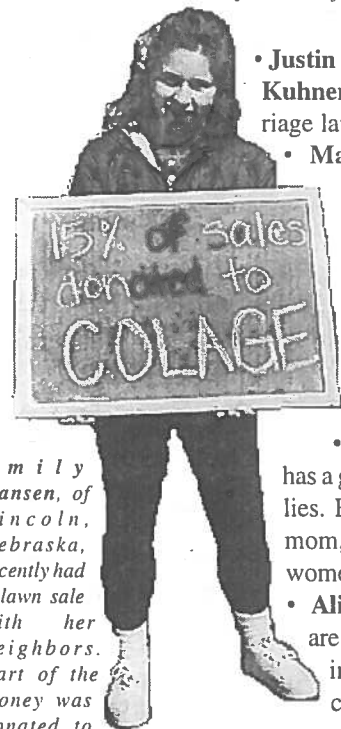
My fiancee and I are an openly lesbian couple raising three kids that could greatly benefit from a kids club like this! Our oldest boys are very socially aware about alternative family issues and knowing other children in the same types of families interests them tremendously. We have recently joined a lesbian and gay parents group in Northern Ohio. Our family is very proud of the educating we've been doing in our community- every small step helps, right?! We consider your kids club a giant step.

Kathleen and Mia, moms  
Wooster, OH

Letters to COLAGE can be sent, faxed or emailed to us. Please include your name and phone number, and mention if you'd like to be anonymous.

### What are you Doing!?

just some of the things that kids with gay parents have been up to recently related to our families:



Emily Hansen, of Lincoln, Nebraska, recently had a lawn sale with her neighbors. Part of the money was donated to COLAGE.

- **Justin Green, Rachel Hulstein, Beth Bromley and Huckle Kuhner** collected hundreds of letters protesting anti-gay marriage laws
- **Mary Alice Davis** testified to her local School Board about the affects of homophobia on kids with gay parents.
- **Megan McGuire**, formerly of COLAGE Boston, published an article about having two moms in the national magazine *Newsweek*.
- **Beth Bromley and Tara Rose** testified at California hearings against a policy that would outlaw lesbian and gay adoption.
- **Noelle Howey**, a writer at *Seventeen* magazine who has a gay dad, is writing about young women from gay families. Her coworker **Sadie Van Gelder**, who has a lesbian mom, wrote an article about young lesbian and bisexual women for a recent issue.
- **Alison P.** in Chicago and **Naomi Snyder** in Los Angeles are two of many students with gay parents that are working on school papers about our families. (COLAGE can help you do the same, contact us for more info).
- **Ian Wheeler-Nicholson**, a writer with a lesbian mom, published a piece about his childhood in the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* newspaper.

Done something related to gay families or having gay parents? Drop COLAGE a note!

"Multifunctional Family" -continued from front page

had a stroke and part of his tongue was paralyzed. I kept my father behind a protective layer of stories and I hated it.

I hold my father and Michael's relationship in very high regard. In many ways, I emulate it, though as an incurable heterosexual.

They never fall into traditional roles, because there aren't any. Having a gay father means that I am surrounded by charming, attractive men. None of whom is trying to pick me up. Having a gay father also means that I can talk to him about my sex life. And he understands. Occasionally, he offers advice; and get this—it's helpful. Okay, okay. He's a father like any other. He never runs out of financial advice, he worries when I travel, he is anxious for me to settle down and find a "real" job, and lately he's even starting asking about grandchildren. But I forgive him this. After all, it is he who taught me what it is to forgive.

"I never understood why it was okay that some fathers were sexist, beer-guzzling sport thugs, but the fact that mine was a mild-mannered opera queen was unacceptable."

I hated the paranoia that came with having so many secrets. I hated being told that I came from a dysfunctional family (and, it was implied, that I should therefore prepare for a life of crime and general misery), by people whose "functional" families seemed often to be cesspools of muzzled emotions. And I never understood why it was okay that some fathers were sexist, beer-guzzling sport thugs, but the fact that mine was a mild-mannered opera queen was unacceptable. I decided to refuse everyone else's definition of normal. I liked mine better.

Today, I look around and breathe a sigh of relief, grateful to have been exposed to alternative lifestyles at such a young age. Imagine being given the opportunity to question traditional relationships before you are old enough to get into one.

Alison Wearing is a Canadian writer and calls herself "the proud daughter of a homo." This piece originally appeared in the *Toronto Globe & Mail*, 20.VII.94.

## Amazon Mama

by Jyl Safier

My Amazon Mama  
Keeps her back straight  
but nothing else

She can scream like a Banshee  
silent when need be  
she wears taboo tatoos  
under business suits  
She knows the ways of the land  
can unseat any man  
does not flinch from pain  
nor live her life tame



My Amazon Mama  
taught me how to fight  
and be polite  
Live without fear  
know a woman's care



My Amazon Mama  
raised me in a tribe of broad-hipped, honey-lipped  
leather ladies

big-breasts, tough-skin and loud-mouths  
who worship the serpent and love the hunt  
read the stars  
know the healing arts



My Amazon Mama taught me well  
Speak Truth  
Do Not Run

Know Your Strength  
look directly into the barrel of a gun  
Woman Warrior  
or

WitchBitch  
through every age  
you face their rage  
burned raped  
crushed or stoned  
you refuse to subdue  
your Amazon spirit

And Mama because of you  
I am an Amazon Warrior too.

Jyl Safier lives in Berkeley, California. She is working on an anthology of writings by daughters of lesbians called the Lavender Heart Project.



### IS YOUR FAMILY LIKE MINE?



**A first person book review by Flavia Maucci**

Well, I have been waiting for a book like this! My ex-partner and I have disagreed about what to tell our four year old daughter Quetzal when she first asks about her daddy. I think that lesbian mothers in general have a hard time talking about dads. There is so much fear about being replaced or about losing our daughters or sons to fathers.

This book really inspired and excited me. It is going to be really helpful when my daughter comes to me and asks, "Mommy, do I have a daddy?"

"Is Your Family Like Mine?" is a new illustrated book for young children with same-sex parents. It follows a kindergarten girl through a day of talking with her schoolmates about what their various families are like and then talking with her two moms about her own family. The book is well written and age-appropriate. The illustrations are richly drawn and beautiful. This is a story you could read over and over again.

To order a copy write or call Lois Abramchik of Open Heart-Open Mind Press at 852 5th Street, Apt 5B2, Brooklyn, NY 11215. (718)-788-5146.

### "Your Mom's A Lesbian, Here's Your Lunch; Have A Good Day at School." a new video about our families by Felicia Park-Rogers

This 1/2 hour video tells the story of a lesbian named Janie Spahr and her family. The film features Janie's two sons, who are now grown, as well as her parents, twin sister, and former husband. We get great insight on how mom coming out affects them all. It shows the difficulty and also the relief in the re-arranging of a family; people talk about the differences between living with secrets around Janie's sexuality and the truth once she comes out very publicly. Her sons are very eloquent, and while the video isn't explicitly about kids with gay parents, it deals with issues we in face families very well: extended family, straight spouses, and secrets vs. openness. I definitely give it a big thumbs up.

If you are interested in purchasing this film, the distributor is offering a special discount cost of \$25 to COLAGE members. Just be sure to tell them you found out about in COLAGE's Just For Us! Write, call, or e-mail Leonardo's Children, Inc. 26 Newport Road, Warwick, NY 10990, 914-986-6888, Jobywan@warwick.com.

Do you have access to email? The world's first email list for daughters and sons of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents is up and running. This is a discussion list where we can talk about whatever we want, and it's just for us.

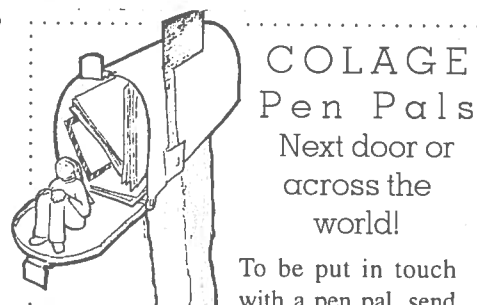
Some of the latest topics of discussion have been **when our parents "flaunt it"**, sisters talking online about their different experiences with their mom, **should COLAGE be "political"** and more.

To subscribe to the list, send email to: majordomo@vector.casti.com and write in the body of the message (not the subject):

subscribe kidsofgays yourfirstname yourlastname <yourlogin@host.domain>

For instance, Janice Doe would send email to: majordomo@vector.casti.com with the info:

subscribe kidsofgays Janice Doe <JaniceD@aol.com>



**COLAGE Pen Pals**  
Next door or across the world!

To be put in touch with a pen pal, send us the following information: name, address, and gender.

Answer the following questions:

What would you tell someone you met for the first time about yourself and family?

What you would like in a pen pal?

We will do our best to find you a suitable pen pal. Please allow a couple months before you receive a response. Thank you to Emily Hansen, our Pen Pal Coordinator.

# Olympic Diver: Greg Louganis!

**Zack:** Let's start with your childhood...When did you discover that you were gay? Did kids make fun of you? How did your parents react?

**Greg:** Growing up I just felt "different." I didn't put sexual orientation to that feeling until later, around 16. Some kids made fun of me, yes. I came out to the world(friends and family knew pretty early on) at the Gay Games in 1994. My mom's reaction was great.

**Zack:** When did you first take up diving? Did you come out to your teammates? What was it like being in the Olympics? What is your most prideful achievement?

**Greg:** I took up diving at age 9. Yes, I came out to some of my teammates. Being in the Olympics is nerve wracking! Some teammates



were supportive but there was a lot of jealousy, primarily because I won so often. My most prideful achievement

is my book, because it seems to be making a difference.

**Zack:** When you found out you were HIV-positive, how did you feel? Who did you tell first?

**Greg:** When I found out I was HIV- positive, I was numb, but my doctor and cousin encouraged me to continue training. The first person I told was my friend Debbie - she's like a big sister to me.

**Zack:** Do you have any advice for kids who have gay parents? Any advice for kids who have someone in their life who is HIV-positive or has AIDS?

**Greg:** My advice to kids who have gay parents is know that you are loved and very much wanted. It's not easy being gay and a parent. If you have someone in you life who is HIV-positive or has AIDS, give them lots of hugs - we all need them.

**Zack:** Thank you!

If you want to interview a famous gay person, contact COLAGE, maybe we can help! (415) 861-KIDS.



## Project: Design Your Own Quilt Panel

One of the beautiful reactions to the AIDS epidemic is the AIDS Memorial Quilt. People have made Quilt panels for their friends and family who have died of AIDS.

Use pictures and writing and anything else to show how you remember the people who have died. If you want, please send it to us to show other kids.

### What you need:

a big piece of cloth or paper  
glue  
scissors  
markers or paints

### Step 1:

Draw or paint the name of a person who has died, or who you want to remember, like "Dads who have died of AIDS"

### Step 2:

Around the name, attach or draw things that you think about when you think of this person. Things like:

**Pictures of them or you**

**Recipes**

**Parts of clothing they like**

**Poetry or phrases you or they liked.**

**Drawings of them**

**Anything that feels important.**

### Step 3:

Once your finished, show it to people so that they can know how you feel. When someone we care about dies, it can be scary and sad, happy and sometimes even a relief, especially if they were in pain.

There is no right way to feel when someone dies. You may not even feel anything.

## More for kids about AIDS...

### Books:

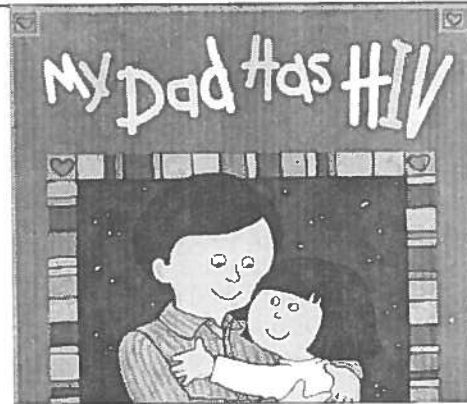
Dougy Center, *Waving Good-Bye: An Activities Manual for Children*. Portland, OR: The Dougy Center, 1991.

Draimin, B.H. *Coping When a Parent Has AIDS*. New York: Rosen Group, 1993.

Rofes, E. *The Kids' Book about Death and Dying*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1985

### Video:

Living with Loss: *Children and HIV*. (Part 4 of the *Hugs InVited* series). Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America, 1991



*My Dad has HIV* by Earl Alexander, Fairview Press, 1996. A young girl whose father has HIV, learns about the virus and becomes proud of him for his efforts at staying healthy.



## About

### "My Dad"

by Denise Connett

Breauna Dickson's story about her dad and AIDS is on the following pages.

**Denise:** When did you write this book?

**Breauna:** I don't know. I was in Kindergarten.

**Denise:** Why did you write it?

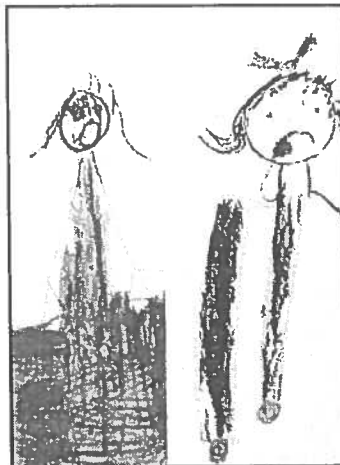
**Breauna:** My teacher told me we were going to write about people we love. I asked if I could write about someone who died. She said yes. I asked

if I could write about my dad who died of AIDS.

**Denise:** Did you get to read it to your class?

**Breauna:** No. I read it to my dad on the last day before kindergarten was over.

**Denise:** Is there anything you want to tell me about the book before I see it?



**Breauna:** It's a little bit funny and a little bit sad.

**Denise:** Who's in your family?

**Breauna:** Me, Gregg [her dad's new boyfriend] and David (dad).

**Denise:** Is there anything you want to tell other kids who have parents with AIDS?

**Breauna:** I know it's sad, but you know they're still with you.

Denise Connett lives in San Francisco. Her dad is gay.

# MY DAD

All text written by:  
**Breauna  
Dickson**

Age 7

\*This book is dedicated to my family.



My dad's name was Kevan. He had goldish hair and green eyes. When I was a baby my dad had to change my diaper. I was really stinky. He had to put a clothespin on his nose!

When I was three, he tickled me a lot, and I tickled him back. We played horsie.

Sometimes I fell off on a soft couch, not on the hard ground.

**Continued on page 10**



# COLAGE KIDS CLUB FunPages

**SPECIAL ISSUE ON AIDS**

Issue 4

Volume 1



for kids with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents

## Submissions!

Whenever you send stuff in (the address is on the front page), please make sure to include the following:

1. Full name, address, & phone number written clearly.
2. Club membership #.
3. A self-addressed and stamped envelope, if you want your submission back.
4. Include your t-shirt size. If we use what you send us, we'll send you a COLAGE t-shirt or another gift.

## Puzzle Solution

The last issue of the FunPages had a challenging connect-the-dots puzzle. The clue was that it was someone who had helped a lot of lesbian and gay people.

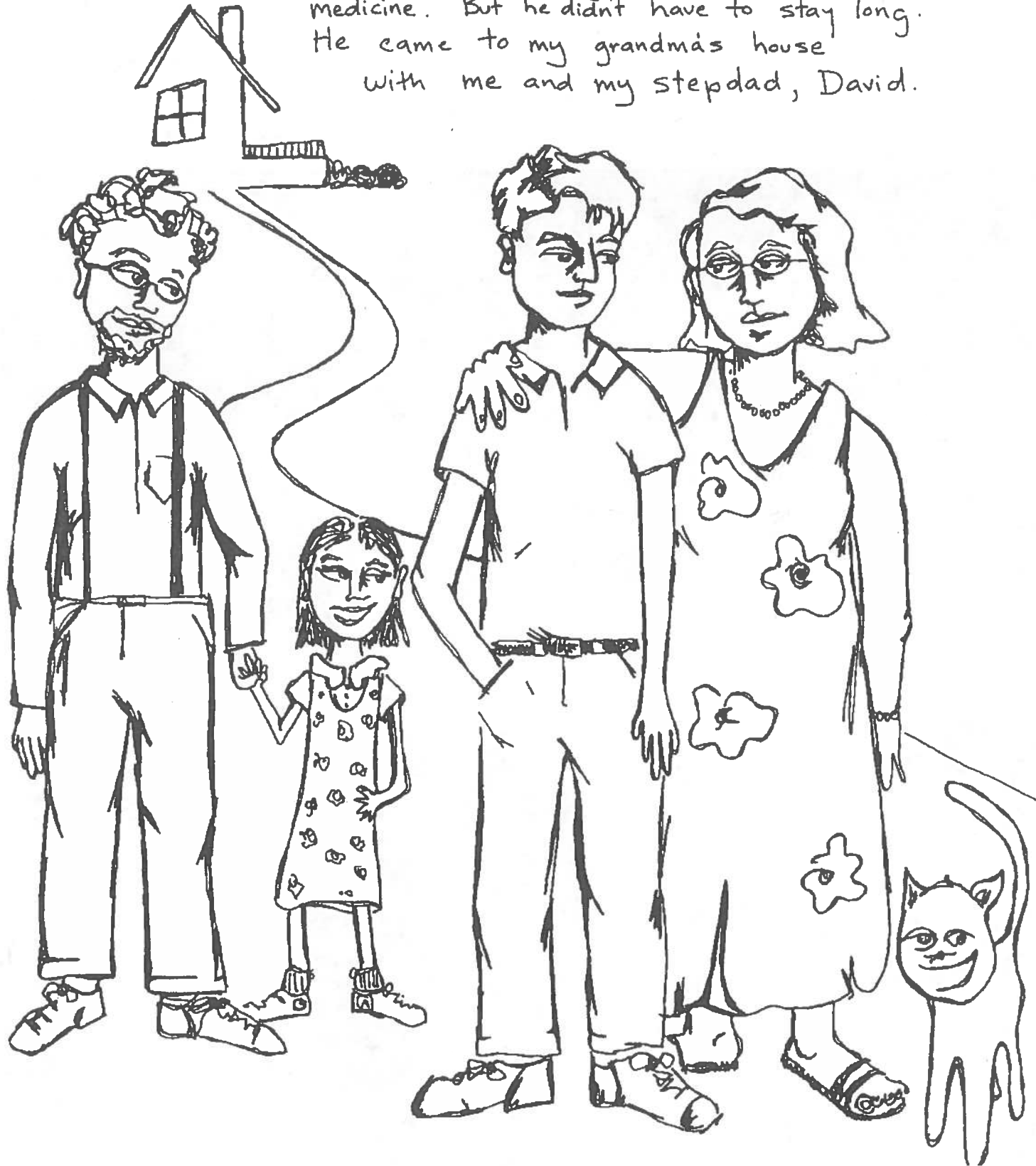
**Answer: Harvey Milk!**

Milk was a politician in San Francisco, one of the first people elected to office to stand up for the rights of gay people. Sadly, he was murdered by another politician who was afraid of the freedoms that Milk stood for.



Continued from page 7

When I was four, my dad got sick. We took him to the hospital. He got tubes and sleeping medicine. But he didn't have to stay long. He came to my grandma's house with me and my stepdad, David.



But he got worse.  
He was throwing up.  
He got AIDS.

I knew something was wrong.  
I was afraid he was going  
to die. And he did.



I was very, very sad.  
I cried very hard.

This issue of the COLAGE Kids Club  
FunPages is dedicated to all the kids who  
have parents affected by HIV and AIDS.  
You are not alone.





His face looked peaceful in the coffin, and I knew he was still in my life.

Now he is up in heaven watching over me.

★ ABOUT THE AUTHOR ★

Breauna Dickson wrote "My Dad" when she was 5 years old. She is currently 7 years old and living in San Francisco, having recently moved from Denver with her two Dads, David and Greg. Breauna is in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Her favorite color is purple.

SCHOLARSHIPS  
by  
Erika  
Simon



The Lee Dubin Memorial Scholarship Fund, currently totaling over \$1,000, is named in memory of a longtime leader of the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International, whose daughters have also been very important to the existence of COLAGE.

This year's recipients of the Lee Dubin Memorial Scholarships are two outstanding students and inspiring people.

**Ann Alden Laudati** is a senior at Ohio University this year, double majoring in Anthropology and African-American Studies. She hopes to go to Rwanda or Uganda this winter for a research assistantship to study a near-extinct species of mountain gorilla. Ann imagines she'll become a professor.

**Erika:** Tell me about your family. When did your mom come out?

**Ann:** My mom and dad split up when I was in fifth or sixth grade, at the beginning of junior high school. I moved in with my mom and in eighth grade she told me. What happened was, she left all these clues—she wanted me to ask her about it. Like she would have the newsletter, The Lavender Express, around. There was all this information promoting or supporting gay rights and I thought, Oh, that's great, these were important issues.

One time in 8th grade we were watching this cheesy show about gay and lesbian parents and their kids. The show was supposed to be a role model for how to talk to each other and one of the kids asked, "Mom, are

you gay?" When the show was over I was joking around imitating the show and I asked, "Mom, are you gay?"—and she said yes! I couldn't say anything, I just went to my room.

In high school I didn't tell many people about it. I have two brothers and they still don't talk about it. But now I regret the closet. When I was a senior in high school I thought it was stupid not to tell people she's gay. My brothers have a harder time with it. They're not much for change.

**Nathan Christopher Bowser** is a first-year student this fall at Evergreen University in Washington. His core class is Science, Art, and Ideology, a culmination of interdisciplinary studies from each of these fields. His dream for next year is to work as an intern for a big theater as their stage manager and doing set production. Eventually, Nathan hopes to own and run his own theater.

step-brother and step-sister who are both way older than me. I grew up in Roseburg, Oregon, where the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA) is very active. (OCA is an organization famous for trying to pass anti-gay legislation) Beth has organized lots of diversity programs, and is very pro-organizing people to speak out against OCA. Beth's been spotlighted in her local paper and they have bumper stickers and pink triangles and a rainbow doormat.

**Erika:** Did you know many other kids with lesbian or gay parents while you were growing up?

**Nathan:** Not really in Roseburg. I knew a really small handful but they were mostly older or younger than me. I did a little babysitting for some kids. Until I was in 6th grade I was totally oblivious—I didn't realize when people said faggot that it was against my mom. She's a nice person, you know, I like her.

Special report:

Scholarships for Students with L/G/B/T parents

**Lee Dubin Memorial Scholarship** from the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International and COLAGE. Applicants must have at least one lesbian, gay, bi or transgender parent. Application from GLPCI, POB 50360, Washington, DC 20091, USA

**Joseph Towner Fund** from the Horizons Foundation. Applicants must have a gay or lesbian parent who resides (or if dead, resided) in the 9-county San Francisco Bay Area. Horizons Foundation, 870 Market St. #718, San Francisco, CA 94102

**Pride Foundation and Greater Seattle Business Association** administer several scholarships for students in the North West (WA, OR, MT, ID, AK). Contact the Pride Foundation for application, (800) 735-7287. Deadline is March 1st.

**Greater Boston Business Council**, a gay and lesbian group, offered a scholarship in 1996. We were not able to confirm by press time if they would be doing it again in '97. Call them at (617) 236-4222.

**National Scholarship Fund for Gay & Lesbian Studies**, for graduate students, 167 Milk Street, Suite 154, Boston, MA 02109-4315 (617) 424-6559 Mark Eley (617) 438-7848 Wynne Walston.

**Greater Santa Barbara Community Association**, Currently open to students who are attending college or other post-secondary educational institution in Santa Barbara county. Contact GSBCA at P.O. Box 90907, Santa Barbara 93190.

*Note: many universities offer undergraduate and graduate scholarships for work on gay topics. Please check with your financial aid or scholarships office.*

**Erika:** Tell me about your family. When did your mom come out?

**Nathan:** My parents divorced when I was two. When I was five or six my mom moved in with Beth. My parents had joint custody of me and I lived back and forth every other week. My dad is remarried, so I have a

Eventually, I met some really good gay friends there and people with gay parents, and we would just go and share stories. Like my friend Elliot, she has a gay father, and we found out we have so much in common. We'd share our stories. It helped me to be really comfortable with my family. Now it's like no big deal, like, yeah I've got a freckle on my face.

**Erika:** Anything you want to say to kids who will read the COLAGE newsletter?

**Nathan:** Hmm. I guess, if there are kids who are having a hard time, don't give up or think you're alone in the situation. I grew up in the timber capitol of the world where 70% are in favor of the OCA initiatives. It was not an accepting town for kids growing up with gay or lesbian parents. Even still, there are people

willing to be nice. The key for me was finding a good support group. I did it through the church and finding nice people. It's out there, you just got to find it.

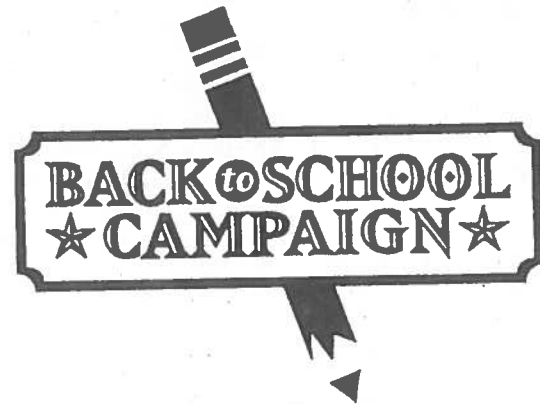
Erika Simon is the Just For Us Newsletter Editor. She grew up with her lesbian mom in Ohio, and currently is finishing her Masters thesis at UNC Chapel Hill.

# Make Change Happen!

We live in two worlds, gay and straight. We can be the bridge to connect the fearful straight mainstream with the reality of gay people and families. Here are some things you can do.

## Join GLSTN's Back-To-School Campaign Help make your school a place where the lesson of respect is taught, rather than that of bigotry.

submitted by GLSTN



The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Teacher's Network (GLSTN) launched their Back-To-School Campaign in September. In the Campaign, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender adults and their supporters are asked to write a former teacher or administrator at a K-12 school they attended, share their experiences there, and ask what is being done to eradicate the homophobia that is so pervasive in our nation's schools.

You can participate in the Back-To-School Campaign by following these simple steps (and/or suggesting your parent/s do so):

1. Choose a teacher or administrator from a school you attend, or attended.
2. Write her or him a detailed personal letter that uses your experiences at that school to illustrate what homophobia does to young people. (Contact GLSTN for a sample letter.)
3. Ask for a reply that specifies what they will do this year to end homophobia in their school or classroom.
4. Send along a copy of GLSTN's packet, "What You Can Do: Ideas and Resources for Educators Working to End Homophobia in Schools," available free of charge (contact GLSTN for copies of the packet).
5. Copy your letter to GLSTN so they can use it to raise awareness among other educators.

For more information about the Back-To-School campaign or about GLSTN, contact them at: GLSTN, 2124 Broadway #160, New York, NY 10023. (212) 727-0135 GLSTN@aol.com.

To submit an announcement to Make Change Happen! send, fax or email to us at Contact Info on the front page. Announcements should be under 200 words and include suggestions on what to do about the issue.



**COLAGE  
Group  
Update**  
by Kate  
Ranson-Walsh

If you or someone you know is in one of these areas, get in touch. They are each interested in starting a group for kids with gay parents.

- Fresno, California**  
Christina Wesley (contact the COLAGE office for more info)
- Sacramento, California**  
Michael O'Donahugh (916) 442 0185
- Willits, California**  
The Blanchette Family, PO Box 71, Willits, CA 95490
- Atlanta, Georgia**  
Julie Kaplan, (404) 712-2246.
- Lincoln, Nebraska**  
Emily Hansen, (402) 421-3844
- Albuquerque New Mexico**  
Jennifer Schneider, (505) 344-1096
- Long Island, New York**  
Long Island Gay and Lesbian Youth, Bayshore. (516) 665-2300
- Toronto, Ontario**  
Kim Burroughs (416) 321 6425
- Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario**  
Sarah Litwiller (519) 742 3727



There are two things a Community can give its children:  
**Roots to grow and Wings to fly.**  
Look for details on COLAGE's exciting new campaign emphasizing the importance of kids with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents.

# COLAGE NOTES

## Welcome to the 96-97 COLAGE Steering Committee

The COLAGE Steering Committee is the groups of folks, all with lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender parents, who coordinates the activities of COLAGE.

They are elected through the mail by a vote of the COLAGE membership.

To reach any member of the Steering Committee please contact the COLAGE office.

This picture was taken at a three-day meeting in San Francisco this August.



Clockwise from upper left:

Sarah Litwiller, 18, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, Media Coordinator

Stefan Lynch, 24 San Francisco, California, USA, Director

Emily Hansen, 16, Lincoln, Nebraska, USA, Children's Coordinator

Denise Connnett, 27, San Francisco, California, USA, Conference Coordinator

Mike Beebe, 26, Seattle, Washington, USA, Chair of the Steering Committee

Erika Simon, 28, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA, Newsletter Editor

Kate Ranson-Walsh, 16, Reston, Virginia, USA, Chapter Outreach & Support

(center) Beth Teper, 25, Berkeley, California, Fundraising Coordinator



## New Assistant Director of the National Office by staff

Felicia Park-Rogers of San Francisco is the newest member of the COLAGE staff. "I'm so excited to be doing this important work. Who could ask for a better group of folks to work with every day?" says Felicia. Felicia's mom and dad split up after they both came out when Felicia was three years old. She was raised mostly by her dad in San Francisco's very gay Castro District. "Growing up in the Castro in the 70's was exciting; at the same time, I didn't know any other kids with gay dads until a few years ago. And I never met anyone who was a "bothie", that is, has a gay dad and lesbian mom, until I joined COLAGE" You can reach Felicia at the COLAGE office (415) 861-5437, M-F 10-6.

## Second Generation Committee Forms

By Denise Connnett and Hope Berry

At the August 1996 COLAGE Steering Committee meeting, a committee was formed to examine second generation issues; that is, issues related to being the lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender daughter or son of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender parents. Already, some COLAGE members receive the Second Generation newsletter, but the COLAGE Steering Committee feels that this part of COLAGE needs to be strengthened & formalized.

The Committee is: Hope Berry, Chair, Les Addison, Dan Cherubin, Denise Connnett, Hallie Iannoli, & Kate Ranson-Walsh

If you have been looking for an opportunity to get involved, this might be it. Contact the office or e-mail Hope at Hope96@aol.com.

## Conference 1996 Was a Smash

by Denise Connnett, Conf. Coordinator

The three day COLAGE conference in Minneapolis this past July was a great success. The first day was a never before tried idea - a ropes course. We spent the day outside scaling 50 foot walls, swinging through the trees, flying over swamps and much much more.

The second day we were so close after our outdoor adventures that we felt like one big family. We talked alot in the workshops some of them new, and some of them old.

Chris DiStefano and Michael Cohen, our expert facilitators, each received a collage of pics from past conferences from COLAGE as thanks for all their hard work.

So...Have you been dying to go to a COLAGE Conference? Did you miss us in Minneapolis? Did you have such a great time in Minneapolis that you want to come again? Well than mark your calendars.

The COLAGE Conference 1997 will be in Philadelphia, July 17th - 20th.

We will be starting off with another surprise event in the City of Brotherly Love. Information on how to register will be sent to you soon. Looking forward to seeing you in Philadelphia!



## Have you Been on TV?

Have you or your family been on the news, a talk show, a documentary? Have you seen stories about us and caught them on tape? We're hoping to put together a video library and a "best of lgbt parents and kids" video. Please call Rosanne Johnson at (415) 861-5437 with leads, or send a copy of the tape to the COLAGE office.