



A PUBLICATION OF
THE LESBIAN AND
GAY FAMILY
BUILDING PROJECT

Pride and Joy Families

Helping LGBT people in New York State build and strengthen their families.

Volume 4 Issue 4

Spring 2008

A Pride and Joy Regional Event

Legal protections for LGBT Families

Sunday April 27, 2008
4-6:30 pm

First Unitarian Society

Ithaca, NY



Join a discussion with a panel of LGBT parents and a legal professional and find out what legal protections are available to us and how we can use them.

We will have supervised activities for kids during the discussion and then all join together for dinner.



Reservations are required

Please RSVP to
Karjarmstrong@aol.com
or to 607.724.4308

Who Are We?

The Lesbian and Gay Family Building Project is funded by a grant from the New York State Health Department and works to help Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people in New York State build and strengthen their families. Our network of Pride and Joy Families provides social and educational activities and a sense of community to LGBT parents and their children.

The Lesbian and Gay Family Building Project
124 Front Street
Binghamton, NY 13905
607.724.4308

www.PrideAndJoyFamilies.org
Claudia Stallman, Project Director
Karen Armstrong, Project Outreach Educator
Loren Couch, Consultant

IN THIS

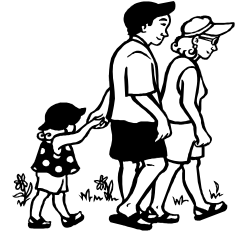
ISSUE:

- Vacations and Kids
- LGBT Health Coalition
- Pride and Joy Buzz
- Upcoming Events

Do you have an idea for an event? Email us at www.PrideAndJoyFamilies.org

Same Sex parenting: The Issues Explained

Free lunch and presentation by Ari Istar Lev, for members of the LGBT community and their health and human service providers.



Friday April 25 11:30am -1:30 pm in Kingston

Friday May 2 11:30am -1:30 pm in Ithaca

Friday May 16 11:30am -1:30 pm in Utica

Registration is Required

Visit www.PrideAndJoyFamilies.org for more info and to register.

*Pride and Joy Families
Parents Night Out
Saturday April 5
8:00pm-?*

*Tranquil Bar and Bistro
36 Pine St
Binghamton, NY*



"The kids I've interviewed are enormously thoughtful-

They are not only sensitive to the discrimination of their group but to other groups as well,"

"This is something that LGBT families have to offer the world."

-Judith Snow

**How it Feels to Have a
Gay Parent,**

Our Healthy Families....



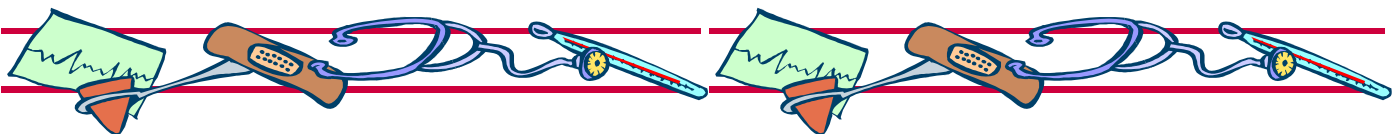
The National Coalition for LGBT Health

The National Coalition for LGBT Health is committed to improving the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and communities through public education, coalition building and advocacy that focuses on research, policy, education and training.

The Coalition was formed in October 2000, when a group of community health advocates convened in Washington, DC to discuss the greater inclusion of LGBT health issues in the nation's Healthy People 2010 objectives. Healthy People 2010 is the federal plan for reducing disparities in health as evidenced by large nationwide surveys and census information. In 2005, the Coalition added a companion document to the which illustrates the full range of health needs of the LGBT community. Advocating to ensure that LGBT people's comprehensive health needs are recognized

Currently, over fifty organizations are involved in the National Coalition for LGBT Health as well as numerous individual members. The Coalition is always looking for new members to help them tackle topics which include LGBT aging, mental health, and universal health care. For information about the Coalition and to become a member, visit the website at www.lgbthealth.net

2008 National LGBT Health Awareness Week April 6-12 2008



**Ten Things to Discuss with your Healthcare Provider
at www.glma.org**

*Consider coming out to your doctor. It's the most effective way to make certain that your health care needs are being addressed completely. If you don't think your doctor is LGBT friendly, go to the
Directory of Family Building Services for LGBT People at www.PrideAndJoyFamilies.org*

EMPIRE STATE PRIDE AGENDA



Equality and Justice Day Tuesday, April 29, 2008 www.prideagenda.org

On Tuesday, April 29, 2008 Join hundreds of New Yorkers who will be traveling to Albany to help win marriage equality, transgender non-discrimination protections, safe schools for LGBT youth, and more funding for our community's health and human services needs.

Register yourself and your children at their website.

Plan *NOW* for Family Week



July 26 til August 2 - Family Week, Provincetown , MA .

Pride and Joy Families from all over upstate New York will gather during this national gathering of LGBT families. If you're thinking of joining us this year, it's definitely not too early to make your reservations for accommodations at Family Week!

Visit www.familyequality.org to find out more



Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network

**LGBT Parents Involved in, Excluded from K-12 Schools;
Children Often Harassed**

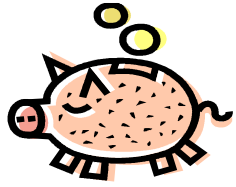
To read the entire report : www.glsen.org

"When we're with our children, especially if they're verbally precocious, friendly toddlers, queer parents wear our queerness like neon rainbow triangles with superimposed lambdas. Our children love to announce in crowded, but otherwise quiet places, "That's my other daddy at the end of the line," or, "No I don't have a daddy, but I have two mommies." But without our kids – especially when surrounded by those who are gaydar challenged – we, like many lone queers, risk passing as straight....."



Read More at www.PrideAndJoyFamilies.org

Vince Sgambati's writing will appear in two forthcoming anthologies to be published by Haworth Press – *Donors and Dads: True Stories of Gay Men and Fatherhood* and *Queer and Catholic* . He lives with his partner of 31 years, Jack; their 11-year-old daughter, Mona; and several furry friends.



Maggie's Money Matters



Dear Maggie,

My partner and I know how important it is to save for the future. But with two young children, so many expenses come up that we can't seem to spare much to put in a savings account. I know the cost of college tuition is rising, and we would like to retire someday. How can we do it?

Signed,
Every Penny Counts

Dear Every,

You and everyone else. The average American household saves a pathetic 0.4 percent of its disposable income, down from 2.4 percent in 1999, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce. One culprit may be low interest rates. When you're making very little money from your savings account, you have less incentive to save and more incentive to spend.

One way to save more is to have money automatically deducted from your paycheck—you'll never miss it. Another way is to have a clear goal. What do you want or need? A

kitchen remodel? A One year sabbatical in Italy? To retire to a condo in P-Town at the age of 55?

Having clear goals will help make putting away some money a little easier. You can even change your password on your account to something that will help you stay focused on your goal. Typing "P-Town Condo" to access your account may make you realize that the future is now.

Signed,
Maggie

www.freemoneyfinance.com

This blog has an active group of readers who post their own suggestions on everything from overlooked tax deductions to saving money on hotel rooms. Another good source on saving: The book *Your Money or Your Life*, by Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin.

Book Review

By Karen Armstrong



Different Daughters: A History of The Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement

The Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) may be little known today, but in *Different Daughters: The History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement*, author Marcia M. Gallo makes clear how crucial this organization was in developing the strong LGBT movement we know of today. Beginning as a tiny San Francisco social club in 1955, the group soon organized local chapters in New York, Los Angeles and beyond. It was a social outlet to many people who were on the lesbian political and literary scene until the organization waned in the 1970s.

In this easy to read historical account, Gallo draws on many interviews with important DOB figures, focusing less on juicy gossip than the tensions that drove the group's evolution: lesbian commonality versus race, class and ethnic differences; political activism versus social activities; collaboration with other homophile organizations versus independence; women's rights versus gay rights.

The author gives considerable space to the history of *The Ladder*, which began as a mimeographed newsletter and soon became a lively, highly literate forum for lesbians nationally and even internationally. She evokes the tense atmosphere of DOB's beginnings, when being out was the same as being outcast. She also does a great job highlighting the several black leaders of the group and how DOB found allies in San Francisco's religious community. This is a respectful, respectable look at an organization overdue for recognition. Taking time to read this one will make us all appreciate the hard work that was done by the brave people that came before us.



The Pride and Joy Buzz

Valentine Family Dance in Ithaca

Over sixty five people attended the **Valentine Family Dance** at the Common Ground in Ithaca on Sunday afternoon, February 10. Four new families joined the Pride and Joy network (and we hope to see more of them at future events). Thanks are due to Doug Miller, owner of the bar, who once again graciously opened up his space to us with kid-friendly food and a great DJ, all for \$5 per family!

Splash Party in Syracuse

Pride and Joy Families had a blast splashing and swimming at the **Pride and Joy Splash Party** at the Skaneateles Community Center's large swim and play area on Saturday January 26. The massive indoor complex held a two story waterslide as well as a couple of swimming pools, a splash pad and a hot tub. Let's do this one again!

Also, the Pride and Joy Syracuse Listserv has been active lately and has been a source of conversation and assistance for families looking for information. Thank you to all who keep the energy going in the Syracuse area.

Parents' Night Out Binghamton

Thanks to Lorraine and Betsy for opening their home to 13 Pride and Joy Parents on Friday January 25. We all enjoyed the tips about How to Talk to kids so they will listen—and listen so kids will talk. We hope everyone is talking and listening! We hope to see everyone at the next parent's night out.

Tom Knight in Rochester

About 30 people (13 adults and 17) kids came to see the amazing Tom Knight Puppet Show at the GAGV Youth Center on December 17. Tom's colorful puppets, his lively music and great showmanship entertained all ages. Thank you to the GAGV for hosting and to Sue Morgan for organizing this great event. Our first ever toy exchange is coming up soon, so check the calendar for details.

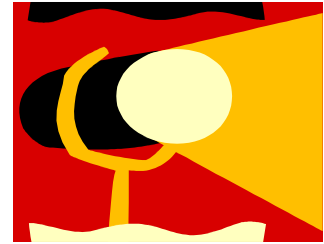
LGBT Families and Adoption

The latest statistics from the U.S. Census 2000, the National Survey of Family Growth (2002), and the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (2004) include:

- An estimated two million GLB people are interested in adopting.
- An estimated 65,500 adopted children are living with a lesbian or gay parent.
- More than 16,000 adopted children are living with lesbian and gay parents in California, the highest number among the states.
- Gay and lesbian parents are raising four percent of all adopted children in the United States.
- Adopted children with same-sex parents are younger and more likely to be foreign born.

SOURCE: [Adoption and Foster Care by Lesbian and Gay Parents in the United States](#), Author(s): Gary Gates, Lee M.V.

Our Spotlight Family..... The Massey-Couch Family of Binghamton



P&J: Who is in your family?

The M-C Family: Sean, Loren and Alfie

P&J: Describe some of your family's favorite activities.

The M-C Family: Swimming, Soccer and Cooking.



P&J: Where did you go on your last family vacation?

The M-C Family: France

P&J: Who in your family is most likely to sleep late?

The M-C Family: Alfie

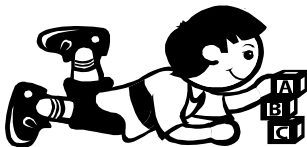
P&J: What was your family's favorite Pride and Joy event?

The M-C Family: We like any event that Alfie's friend Amira comes to!

P&J: Is there anything else you would like us to know about your family?

The M-C Family: We are having a fun time. We like travel and social activities with folks. Alfie is always ready for a play date-so call us!

Pride and Joy Families



Toy/Game/Book

Exchange

Sunday April 20

GAGV

Rochester

" Bring your old and
get some new!"

Check the calendar for
details

Summer's Comin' and so is Vacation!

by Barbara Barry, LMSW

As winter continues to drag on, the kids and you may seriously be getting on each other's nerves. You may be dreaming about being anywhere but inside; maybe a beach or amusement park.

As a very compulsive planner, I usually begin to plan our summer vacation as soon as football season is over. Although you may be less of a planner, it is still time to begin to think about where to go for the summer and maybe how to make it less of a hassle.

Having children certainly adds a wrinkle to the planning. There are a lot of things to consider when you can't just wing off to Aruba with your partner for the week. Here are some suggestions on how to plan and make your vacation a little more enjoyable for you and the kids.

1) If you are going to bring the kids, you must plan the vacation around the kids. Period. This seems straightforward, but I am often surprised at how people disregard this advice. If you have been dying to take a ten day tour of the Napa wine country, maybe change it to five days and leave the kids with grandma. Otherwise, you and the kids will be miserable. I am not suggesting that every detail of the trip needs to be kid centered, but you must be able to make them happy or they will figure out how to make the trip very unpleasant for you. This advice also applies for freebies. It may be great that grandpa lets you use his time share in Del Boca Vista but if all the other residents are 80 and hate your kids, how much fun will that be?

2) Ask the kids for suggestions about what they would like to do. If they are able to play a part in the planning, it may give you some leverage later when they claim boredom. As well, if your kids are able to help plan a full day at a waterpark, they may be much more agreeable to walking around the Tyler County Historical Society's Annual Quilt Show and Shoo Fly Pie-Palooza.

3) Don't underestimate your kids. My partner and I are both history buffs and could spend a whole vacation visiting historical homes, forts, encampments and the like. We always pull in a few of these places to visit wherever we go. My kids have become great joiners in this and now actually look forward to these places. The big hit with the boys is anywhere where there are cannons and my partner and daughter love anyone dressed in costume.

4) Don't overestimate your kids. We have come to the conclusion that the one indisputable fact for vacations is that my children need a beach and/or a pool wherever we stay. Most places you stay know this, so it is generally not a problem. There may be days when all your kids want to do is dig in the sand or they may just want to lay in the sun and read a magazine. Remember that your kids need a vacation too and listen to what they can handle on any given day.

5) Traveling in the car may be the most stressful time. One good rule of thumb is don't drive longer than twice the hours of your youngest child's age. If you need to go somewhere with a longer drive, than stop for an extended time at the point your kids start to crack. Go to a playground, have lunch, and let your kids run around for at least an hour. Bring plenty of food and drinks. Wrap three or four "surprises" for each child that contain things to do in the car. Again, when the kids start losing it, have them open a present—it might buy you a half hour or so. If your kids will watch it, a portable DVD player can be a godsend.

6) Flying brings with it a whole set of other problems. See the rule about doubling the child's age in # 5. In all honesty, I would avoid flying with children under 4 at all costs. If you must fly, bring gum or peanuts or pacifiers to help them chew to protect their little ears. Acknowledge that you will disregard all discipline and good parenting on the plane and your only goal will be to keep your child occupied and quiet. If you have ever been on a plane listening to another person's child screaming and listened to the parent say "we can't have yogurt until you stop crying..." you are like me if you wanted to scream "Give him the %^\$# yogurt!". Keep the kid happy at all costs until you are on the ground again.

7) Pack well. I am a planner, so we usually pack so much we could get lost in the desert for three weeks and survive. Have separate bags for separate activities. For example, have a bag with everyone's swimsuit and towels that is brought on swimming expeditions. Same thing with sand toys. Same thing for hiking or exploring. Have three or four cooler sizes for different activities. The big cooler is worth carrying for a whole day at the beach while the small lunchbox can carry drinks and snacks to the museum when you know you will be eating lunch at the museum shop. PS: you may have noticed I am obsessed with bringing food everywhere. It always pays huge dividends, so do it.

Continued

“We spent the rest of the day looking for the escaped bear...”



Summer's Comin' continued...

8) **Learn the difference between what you can control and what you can't.** And then relax about the things you cannot control. These unplanned perks may end up being the best most memorable parts of the trip. On a trip to Ontario, we were trying to get to an animal park, but all the roads were blocked by nice Canadian policeman. After trying several ways to get to the park, it dawned on me that because all the roads to the park were blocked, the park might be the issue. I asked a very cute policeman what was going on and he replied in a nice Canadian accent “Grizzly Bear escaped, ma'am”. Well, so much for going to the animal park but we spent the rest of the day on the look-out for the escaped bear and the kids loved every minute of our hunt.

9) **Finally, know your own limits.** Planning too much can turn a vacation into what my partner always calls the “Bataan Death March” . When she says this I know I am pushing her and the kids too much and we need to take a breather. So I reluctantly put away my vacation planning file and sit back and watch the sunset.

Summer Lovin'

We would love to hear about some of your most memorable family vacations. Email them to Karen at Karjarmstrong@aol.com and we will print them in our summer issue!



Fun Websites for Kids

Pop bubblewrap at www.virtualbubblewrap.com

Find out how many people in the US have your name at www.howmanyofme.com

Make your own ransom note (for fun, of course) at www.contactsheet.org

Paint draw and color at www.coloring.com

Build cool digital creatures at www.mamamedia.com

