

News Flash! News Flash!

Just For Us has changed its
name and expanded its
services

Our new name is

COLAGE

**Children of Lesbians and
Gays Everywhere**

You can also call us to find out more
about us and be put on our mailing
list. Or you can talk to our Media Co-
ordinator, or find out more about our
annual conference.

The number to call is:

(202) 583-8029

Our mailing addresses and the name
of our quarterly newsletter, *Just For
Us*, have remained the same.



2300 Market St. #165, San Francisco, CA 94114, USA.
 Box 187 Station F, Toronto, ON M4Y 2L5, CANADA
 (202) 583-8029

(If you haven't done so, please read Shannon's message on the other side)

Dear Parent,

There are so many wonderful kids like Shannon who are still alone. But like Shannon, they don't have to be. COLAGE is doing on an international scale what we helped her to do in her own town. That's why it's difficult for me to contain my excitement. Right now, we are at a turning point in the organization. If we can raise enough money, we'll be able to reach more kids like Shannon with a level of services we couldn't have imagined just a few years ago.

The reason right now is so important is that for the first time COLAGE has enough committed people with lesbian, gay and bisexual parents with a vision of what the organization could be, to begin taking it there. There are so many wonderful kids, like Shannon, who are willing to help other kids from families like theirs, but COLAGE isn't able to fully utilize their enthusiasm and talent because we simply don't have enough money. We're doing our own fundraisers, writing grants and soliciting memberships, but it won't be enough.

Here's just some of the things that are waiting for funding:

- The COLAGE Kids Club, an exciting new program for kids under ten.
- Speakers, Banners and Buttons for Stonewall 25.
- Press Kits to get the word out that we do exist.
- The COLAGE Writer's Program to encourage kids to record their experiences for the benefit of themselves and kids like them.
- A booklet about AIDS and our families.

In the last six months alone, the volunteers who run COLAGE have put in nearly 1,500 hours of work into the organization. But without your help, a lot of what we've done will have to be put on permanent hold. We've taken the initiative, like Shannon, to help other kids like ourselves. Now we need your help to make sure our work pays off for the thousands and thousands of kids who really need it. Thank you in advance for whatever you can give.

Love makes a family,

Stefan Lynch
 Co-Director

P.S. Before you make out your check, will you search your heart? If you have been touched by Shannon's story, or have kids in your own life who you think might benefit from what COLAGE is trying to do, would you consider a larger gift? Every dollar you give will go to services for kids like Shannon. And like Shannon, they make a difference in other kids' lives.

Yes, I want to help. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

- \$25 \$50 \$100
 \$250 Other

Other ways to support COLAGE

- I have enclosed my employer's matching gift form
 I would like to volunteer to help COLAGE
 I am enclosing names and addresses of people who might be interested in COLAGE

Name _____ Phone () _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov _____ Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____

Please make your tax-deductible US check or money-order payable to COLAGE and mail to 2300 Market St. #165, San Francisco, CA 94114

A message from COLAGE and COLAGE member Shannon Bowman-Sarkisian, 13, of San Jose, California.

FYE -
going out
soon
-S

Finding out

My mom came out to me a year ago, that was in April. We were watching the March on Washington on TV and she just sort of told me. We'd always been taught about equality and tolerance, but it was still really hard for my mom. She'd known for a long time that there was something different inside of her, but it was only a couple months before that she'd figured it out. She was all prepared with books and stuff and I was the first person she told.

Being Alone

I was cool with my mom being a lesbian. I mean I had a lot to learn, but that was okay. I really wanted to tell people because I felt totally alone, but then I started noticing all the fag jokes at school. Teachers weren't doing anything about it, and I had heard about gay people getting beat up and that was in the back of my mind. I was just a little sixth grader!

I needed to talk about this with someone besides my mom. I went to PFLAG and it was cool, but we weren't on the same wavelength. I couldn't find a group for kids like me, so that's why I wanted to tell my teachers, or friends at school. It's really scary coming out to teachers about my mom, because you have to sit in their class the entire time.

Telling

Finally I did tell one, and eventually I did tell some of my friends, but they didn't really react. I still couldn't talk to them, they just didn't get it. I couldn't say I went to the movies with my mom and her girlfriend, they wouldn't get that this was significant to be in public like that. And there was a lot of stuff I was doing that I couldn't tell my friends. I was going to PFLAG and the Pride Parade, I even spoke to the school board about how important it was to have gay-friendly resources at school and got my picture in the lesbian and gay paper. My mom freaked! I was like "MOM!". I was "Ms. Social Action Girl!", but I was afraid of the reaction I'd get from my friends about all that. None of my friends really understand how hard it is for me or my mom to come out. This lasted from April to November, sixth months.

Starting Gaybies

There's something else, too. I have this unity feeling with lesbians and gay men and their kids. If I see women holding hands it makes me so happy, I want to applaud. I finally said, "fine! I'm going to start my own group for kids like me." I needed a name, but there's no word for us kids, there's nothing. It's like we aren't even acknowledged. So I made up my own name for us, I called the group Gaybies. I sat down on my computer and wrote what I wanted and posted it all over the place.

Finding Friends and COLAGE

The first things that happened is that my Minister's partner told me about these kids she knew with a lesbian mom, and it turned out they went to my school! I was so excited you wouldn't believe. It was amazing. Then a couple people from COLAGE called and told me about their conference and newsletter and the hundreds of kids they're in contact with. They even sent me a booklet they made on how to start and run a group and helped me find more members.

The first meeting of our group was really great. Our moms came and we just started talking and eating pizza. We talked about everything from going to the beach to having to deal with prejudice at school. We also realized, that nobody in the group knew anyone else like us, so we were like "oh my god, there must be so many people out there who are alone!" We even did our own newsletter.

We passed around the stuff from COLAGE, and started talking about how to raise money to get to the COLAGE conference. So we're planning a car wash and a silent auction so far. After that first meeting we got in the news, and now we have nine people who come to every meeting and more people that are trying to come. Even some parents who haven't come out to their kids yet, called asking for us to help. It's grown so much and we're still getting calls. We need more older people to help us because we have so many people.

I Love IT!

The group is something that's really important to me. My teachers would be amazed at how organized I am about this group, I'm usually not organized in the rest of my life. It's so much easier when it comes from myself and not people telling me to do it. I can shift my own gears. I really love doing this!

Bad Reactions

I still have problems with kids at school though. I was confronted by one of my friends who asked me if I was gay. I said, "ask my boyfriend." I don't have a boyfriend but I read that in a book and I've always wanted to say it! Another kid who lived next door to me said, "I knew your mom was weird but not that weird." I started crying. He got detention for two days, but even after that he started bothering me about having a lesbian mom wearing freedom rings and stuff. Most of the kids who're like that leave me alone.

It was Totally Worth IT!

A year later, I feel really great about my mom. It's totally opened my world. I'm putting all this into my school record, especially things like speaking at Stanford University to a group of student teachers. I feel great about how it's turning out. It's better than anything I've ever done -- helping a bunch of people who are really great.

December 31, 1996

Today is Stefan's last day as the Director of COLAGE. We are very sad to see him go. Stefan has worked tirelessly as a volunteer for three years for COLAGE/GLPCI. He has turned COLAGE into a healthy, stable, productive program that effectively and efficiently responds to the needs of children with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender parents.

More than just responding, Stefan has worked to make COLAGE a pro-active voice for children with gay parents, alternative families, and queer rights. Stefan has been extraordinary in insisting on doing this work not alone, but in coalition with other organizations and by bringing in new kids to COLAGE on an almost daily basis.

Stefan is irreplaceable.

As he moves on to do new work and create new visions, I wish him all the best in the world. Stefan will be staying in San Francisco for the time being and among other projects, will be volunteering to help with a few small projects for COLAGE.

Please try to join his friends and colleagues on January 18 to celebrate his work (not to mention his birthday). Please call and write your congratulations and thanks to Stefan if you can't make the party.

Sincerely,

Felicia Park-Rogers

April 25, 1997

Dear COLAGE member,

Spring is here at last. If you have a spare moment, come by and visit the COLAGE office. You will see that Spring has definitely sprung here at our happy home in The Women's Building. We are busy at work keeping our great programs going as well as starting a few new things. So I thought this would be a nice time to let you know about a few of them.

Kayla Strassfeld, the COLAGE program intern, has been hard at work helping start a new local San Francisco/Bay Area COLAGE chapter. As COLAGE National is strengthening its chapter system nationwide, more and more people are becoming involved nationally and locally. The Bay Area has the largest concentration of kids with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender parents and many of us are doing very exciting things. We see the new local chapter as a great way to organize and connect Bay Area kids and families with each other, as well as to work in coalition with the other local family organizations and groups. If you are interested in getting involved with this exciting project please call Kayla at the office. We especially need teen-aged folks to get involved!

Summer is coming, and with it many COLAGE activities for the whole family. Please spread the word, bring a friend, and give us a call if you have time to help out. Enclosed is a flyer for a particularly great event: "**To Get The Words Out**,"—a reading of poetry and prose by adult COLAGERS about their experiences of growing up with lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender parent(s). The reading is the culmination of a writing workshop for COLAGERS led by poet and son a gay man and a lesbian, Noel Black. Whether you're a kid who wants to hear writing by other kids or a parent who wants to know what your kid really thinks you're guaranteed to get something out of the reading. Please join us on **Thursday, May 8 at 7pm at 777 Valencia St.**

Our **adult brunch** gathering continues the second Saturday of month at 11 am at Josie's Juice Joint. The next brunches are: **May 10**, June 14, July 12, and August 9.

Although our younger kids group goes on hiatus after May until September, there is a **fabulous picnic** in June to which everyone is invited. Bring some food to share and a ball to throw **Sunday June 8 from 12-3**. (Please note, this is a new date, and it's the real date!) And there will be one in August too, date TBA.

At the end of June is Pride weekend (June 28 and June 29). COLAGE has been working with the new organization called All Our Families Coalition, a coalition group representing alternative family organizations in the Bay Area, to prepare for this giant family party. Call us now to volunteer to be a safety monitor and get a **free COLAGE T-shirt**, they're new and really cool. You'll hear more about the picnics and pride in a mailing in a couple of weeks.

Was that enough information for you?! And that is just local stuff!! We hope your lives are full and fruitful. Please don't hesitate to call with questions or just to say hi! I look forward to seeing you on May 8, (yes, I'll be reading some poetry too) or at another of our upcoming events.

Love to you and your family,



Felicia Park-Rogers, Director

PS Check out updated web-site! Stefan Lynch, webmaster extraordinaire, has made a great new COLAGE web site. WWW.COLAGE.ORG

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere 2300 Market St., #165 SF CA 94114 415-861-5437

COLAGE Annual Report 1993-1994

Our Mission:

To foster the growth of daughters and sons of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents of all racial, ethnic and class backgrounds by providing education, support and community on local and international levels, to advocate for our rights and those of our families and to promote acceptance and awareness in society that love makes a family.

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere changed its name this year to better reflect the increasing number of daughters and sons who can participate in "Just For Us". We handled the responsibility for placing our year for lesbian and gay families.

For many lesbian and gay families, the death of a child was a devastating loss. For example, a mother and her son Tyler, was the memory. COLAGE responded with money and letters of support for their behalf from nearly thirty kids. The Center for Lesbian Rights; testimony.

Another force ravaging our families is AIDS. For many of our members, COLAGE created support groups for fathers who have died. We also help members coping with AIDS in their families.

The support that local groups for daughters and sons of lesbian and gay parents provide on matters like AIDS and others is very important. COLAGE has worked hard to start and foster those groups. We've produced a draft of a guide to starting and running groups, and as the year draws to a close, the first issue of our new newsletter for group leaders is in production. In the near future, there will be **over twenty local groups** for kids in the U.S., Canada and Norway which we know of.

Several of those groups will be in San Francisco, where COLAGE established a strong presence this year with a production entitled **Children of Stonewall: A COLAGE Experience**. Children of Stonewall was a collection of art and other material by and about daughters and sons of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents. It featured the play, "Out of My Parent's Closet" by Suzanne Pullen, a play based on interviews with daughters and sons, and starring actors with lesbian and gay parents. Over Mothers Day weekend the show drew rave reviews and nearly 300 parents, kids, and their supporters. The video tape will soon be available.

We have plans to improve our existing services, include younger kids in future programming, and, of course, change the world.

June 16, 1994

Emily Gmerek and Stefan Lynch on behalf of the COLAGE Steering Committee:
Linda Columbus, Alex Fagelson, Anna Heller, Molly Heller and Dawn Williams.

For general distribution w/ the newsletter.

ed its name this
vocate and
five hundred kids
of daughters and
our newsletter,
and were
appearances this

ms, separating
in recent
dely, soliciting
stimony on
National
personally.

many of
of our
and support our



3 Opportunities

You Don't Want to Miss!

1 **FAMILIES 101, THE 1995 COLAGE CONFERENCE IN LOS ANGELES**

June 30-July 3rd on the campus of University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

Join over sixty teens and twenty-somethings for our best conference yet! With workshops for new-comers and old-timers, and featuring exciting panels like "Radical Lesbians and Gays: The Questions You've Always Wanted to Ask", you don't want to miss this one.

For more information on the conference, write to GLPCI '95 Conference, 7985 Santa Monica Blvd. #109-346. West Hollywood, CA 90069. Or call COLAGE at (415) 861-KIDS. See you in LA!

2 **GLPCI/COLAGE SCHOLARSHIP**

For the second year, the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International and COLAGE will be awarding \$500 in scholarship money to further the education of a deserving child of a lesbian or gay parent.

Applicants must have at least one lesbian, gay or bisexual parent and be enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited post-secondary institution. The scholarship recipients will be announced on July 3rd, 1995 at GLPCI's 16th Annual Conference in Los Angeles.

Applications for the GLPCI/COLAGE scholarship are available now by calling GLPCI at (201) 783-0383. Deadline for applications is May 15th, but it may be extended, so please call.

3 **SUMMER INTERNSHIPS AT COLAGE IN BEAUTIFUL SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA!**

Spend your summer in California serving daughters and sons of lesbian and gay parents. Learn about fundraising, desktop publishing, database management and more at our office in the heart of San Fran's Castro and Mission districts. Your work will include organizing events, coordinating projects, speaking with the media, designing and writing publications and more. Get great work experience at this growing non-profit.

Two unpaid internships are available, for part-time or full-time. Full-time will include free housing. To find out more, please call Stefan Lynch, COLAGE's Executive Director, at (415) 861-5437.

Dear friends, family of choice, colleagues, and others,

After 3 years as the Director, and 4 1/2 years involvement, I am leaving Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere. This is a friendly parting -- it's just time to move on. I'm happy to say that the organization will do just fine without me. And I'll still be around; I can't stop being the son of a lesbian and gay man.

In the last several years of getting COLAGE on its feet, I've been blessed with many things, wonderful volunteers, solid leadership on the Boards of both COLAGE and the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International, visionary initiative by those who started what would become COLAGE (just to set the record straight, I didn't start this organization, others, including Anna and Molly Heller of Boston, Hope Berry (now of San Francisco) Ali Dubin of LA, Claudia Lamanno of NY, and more, were the ones who started what was then Just For Us. Hope dragged me in 2 years after things had already started.) Thank you all.

I want to make a few parting thoughts, mainly directed at those of you WITH gay and lesbian parents. The rest of you are welcome to read along.

Many of us with gay parents are growing up, or grew up, isolated from each other. Overcoming that isolation has always been the top priority of COLAGE. And in the process, we've started affecting the consciousness of what it means to be the daughter or son of LGBT parents. When I was young, I didn't have a sense of being part of something bigger. I knew there were other kids out there, but I didn't know them. Now I do, and many of you do, too. We are checking our individual experiences against each other and what we are finding are some basic similarities -- like dealing with our own "closet" of having gay parents. -- and a lot of differences. I was shocked 4 1/2 years ago at my first COLAGE conference to discover that not all kids with gay parents were like me!

I want to challenge all of us with gay parents to respect out differences, but to continue to work on building a loose-knit community. Why? It may sound hokey, but we have a legacy to leave to a younger generation. We've all blazed, and are blazing, trails of tolerance for others to follow. And it's not just those with gay parents. By challenging what a family is, we are helping make space for interracial families, intergenerational families, poor families, single-parent, foster parent, adoptive parent, mixed faith, mixed-up, divorced, step-parented, community-parented, love-makes-a-family families. We are making space for society, the state and our own communities to recognize the value to us all of valuing a broader definition of families, so instead of fighting against public opinion, against laws that were meant to support but simply exclude, and against one another for a piece of pie that we were never meant to have, we can get on with getting on.

And, of course, we are blazing other trails. It's a lot harder now to be a member of MY biological family, or to be one of MY friends or acquaintances, and hate gay people. It's a lot harder now to teach that AIDS is divine retribution in MY high school, or to omit gay topics in the curriculum of MY college. And it's a lot harder now to go on TV or the papers and attack me and my family. You can do it, but you're going to hear about it from me, or



someone like me, and you'll have your misguided hate on your conscience a little more than you once did.

And it's a lot harder now for ANYONE to trot out the myths about gays recruiting, gays not having kids, gays being evil teachers, gays being molesters, gays making gays out of children, gays being anti-family, gays this, gays that, because you and I are living our lives as openly and honestly as we can -- and we're tough to argue with.

So our legacy is a big one. We didn't have a choice to be the children of gay parents, and we don't HAVE to do anything. But I hope that you'll think about that legacy (and it is real, young kids today with gay parents are growing up in a different world because of our families) and continue to be as open, honest, real and reflective as you can. Our power is not so much in marching in the streets (although that's important for other reasons and maybe we should all try it sometime!) but in marching through our lives as examples to those around us.

So, hopefully, when the newer generation of kids with LGBT parents grows up, they won't have to answer, over and over and over and over, "Now how did YOU happen?" or "So are YOU gay, too?" or "That must've been AWFUL!" or "Which one of your moms is the DAD?" or the worst question of all, silence.

It's been a wonderful few years at COLAGE. I urge you to support kids of LGBT parents with your time and money.

If you want to contact me, you can leave a message for me at the COLAGE office, (415) 861-5437, or you can email SLCOLAGE@aol.com. I'll be staying in San Francisco, but taking a break for a few weeks. Then I'll be looking for part-time work (here that all you Bay Area employers?), training for a SF to DC bike-ride, making a CD-ROM about my dad, and editing a book for teenagers with LGBT parents. Oh yeah, I forgot to mention opening a vegan anarchist cafe, starting an alternative currency in the Mission barrio, looking for a new place to live, and figuring out my love-life. And that's before summer ;)

Felicia Park-Rogers, formerly the Assistant Director of COLAGE, is the new Interim Director, please extend to her all the kindness and generosity you have given me (and if you HAVEN'T extended such in the past, make it one of your New Year's Resolutions to support her and COLAGE!)

Thanks again - enjoy 1997.

Stefan Lynch
former Director, Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere.

P.S. Those of you in the Bay Area, or who feel like making a trip to the Foggiest Place on Earth, a combination COLAGE retirement and 25th Birthday party is being held for me on Saturday, January 18th in the evening the the Lavender Lounge on Folsom @11th. The organizers (bless their hearts) are keeping the details secret from me, but I have seen the invitation. If you haven't gotten one, and you're getting this email directly from my, it's



probably an oversight (mine - I'm sorry!) Please email Hope Berry at HOPE96@aol.com and tell her that Stefan said you were invited and please send a paper invitation.

PPS If you HAVE received an invitation and you haven't RSVP'd, get on it! You can ask Hope (hope96@aol.com) for another one. You can also ask her for details of the event. But don't tell me.

UPDATED MATERIAL

Dear

We are writing to ask you to help COLAGE and the Lesbian and Gay Parents Association (LGPA) raise awareness and money for two new and exciting projects which together have the potential to counter the effects of homophobia on kids and stop it all together.

In 1994 each group independently decided to create tools they could use to support isolated kids and inform teachers, administrators, kids, and the public about homophobia's effects on kids, and what they can do about it.

Educational Video:

The LGPA completed a video, "Both My Moms' Names are Judy" and began using it in their children's schools to teach the staff about homophobia's effects. ^{soon however} But more and more people started hearing about it, and by February they were getting requests from all over the city to present it. By March, parents and educators from school districts across the country were calling and writing, trying to get ahold of the video, prompted mostly by word of mouth.

COLAGE Kids Club

COLAGE recognized that an alternative is needed to the hateful and isolating messages that kids with lesbian and gay parents receive. That's why we have created the COLAGE Kids Club, a new membership club for young kids with lesbian, gay and bisexual parents. The club features a quarterly FunPages with content by and about its members, games, cartoons, and more, all presented in an engaging and affirming way. Membership benefits include pen pals, membership cards, birthday cards, books like "Daddy's Roommate" and more.

Overwhelming response

The all-volunteer LGPA is being overwhelmed by requests for the video and training materials. Requests are coming in faster than they can be filled, and this is *before* any structured outreach.

COLAGE has recently sent sample issues of the COLAGE Kids Club FunPages to 9,000 families, press and organizations, and requests have been pouring in.

Dozens of parents have tracked us down after only hearing that the Club might exist.

Meeting the challenge

Seeing this enthusiastic response to both our projects, COLAGE and the LGPA decided to work together to raise enough money for the staff and community support that these projects need and deserve.

Throughout 1995 and into 1996 COLAGE and the LGPA will be holding a series of house-parties around the Bay Area and beyond, to inform different communities about these new projects, and raise money to carry them through.

We would like you to support these projects by hosting a house-party and I have attached a detailed explanation of what this means. Through our interactions with you in the past and your support of our work, I feel you would be an excellent host, and I encourage you to read over the details attached. I'll be calling you in a few days to answer any questions you have and possibly set a date for a house party sometime in the next 12 months.

Thanks for your past support, and I hope you'll be able to help us again.

Sincerely,

Kim Lawton
LGPA

Stefan Lynch
COLAGE

(a very personalised PS goes here)

Stefan

COLAGE/LGPA House Parties

Purpose: to spread awareness of, and raise funds for these organizations, and particularly their new programs: the video, "Both My Moms' Names are Judy" and the COLAGE Kids Club.

Overview: Throughout 1995-96 COLAGE and LGPA will be holding house parties which target different communities in the Bay Area and beyond. COLAGE and LGPA will work with hosts to tailor the party to their particular group of guests.

Your responsibilities as a host:

- 1) Provide a comfortable space (usually your home)
- 2) Provide food and drink for the guests
- 3) Work with COLAGE/LGPA to develop a list of between 35-75 guests (apx. 1/3 of whom will come)
- 4) Work with COLAGE/LGPA to tailor the party to your particular guests needs/tastes including:
Invitation ; *name, etc (tailor?)*
Menu
- 5) Be willing to mention on the invitation something about giving \$\$, whether it's "please bring your check book" or "I will be asking you to support these exciting new projects" etc.
- 6) Be willing to donate a significant monetary amount to COLAGE/LGPA, and ask guests to join you in making a significant gift of their own. *
- 7) Help us identify two to four guests who will join you in making a gift of their own (as an additional cue to other guests as when to give).
- 8) Record RSVP's and answer your invitee's questions about the house party and the LGPA and COLAGE.
- 9) If there are people who you think would have donated if they had come to the party, you should be willing to follow up by calling and asking for money, or signing a letter asking for money.

What would be helpful, but necessary, that you have:

A list of guests who will have something in common besides knowing you.

A large television and VCR which can be positioned so that everyone can see the video (we could provide it, if necessary)

Our responsibilities:

- 1) Work with hosts to develop a list of guests who will be comfortably with each other
- 2) Work with hosts to tailor the house party to their guests tastes and needs
- 3) Pay for, Design, print and mail the invitation, with the hosts input and approval.
- 4) Brief hosts on answers to questions about LGPA and COLAGE and the house party.
- 5) Provide hosts with an easy mechanism for tracking RSVP's.
- 6) Provide hosts with a script for making the pitch for money to use as a guide.
- 7) Provide volunteers to help direct people and clean-up on the day of the party.
- 8) At the party, present the video, Kids Club, and answer questions about them and our organizations.
- 9) Communicate with you after the event to assess how it went
- 10) Promptly and appropriately thank all donors.

*for some groups, a flat cost for the dinner, large or small, might be more appropriate. We can determine this when we plan the party.

send

This is one model for a house party:

While the primary goal of these house parties is to make money, and raise visibility and support for these two projects, none of that will happen if your guests don't enjoy themselves. We will keep this in mind always.

You greet your guests and make them comfortable and explain to them that once most people are finished eating, there will be a presentation and then desert. We recommend that all food is buffet style finger food, and lots of it.

After most people have arrived and eaten something (about an hour into the party), you ask them to gather, thank them for coming, and explain what your involvement is with COLAGE or LGPA or the issues we represent. Explain that you are excited about what they are doing and introduce a representative of COLAGE.

We will give a very brief over-view of our organization, introduce the COLAGE Kids Club and explain why we need money for it. COLAGE will then introduce the LGPA, which will do the same thing, finishing by showing the video. After the 10 minute video, you lead applause and using the script we give you as a guide, explain why you support the project.

You take out your check book. You ask the guests to join you in supporting these important projects. At this point your friends who have been previously asked to do so will take out their check books and begin writing, and COLAGE/LGPA volunteers will pass out envelopes for people's checks. All of this is to make your guests comfortable that this is the time to give. They know from the invitation and from talking with you that this is a fundraiser, and the clearer it is that this is the appropriate time to contribute, the better.

You remain standing and expectant, even if they have to go find their jackets and purses. Once most people have written their checks and given them to you or another volunteer, you thank people for their support and encourage them to eat and drink more.

It seems contrived, but the point is to let people know that it's time to give. They know from the invitation that that's why they are there, so it's no surprise. It's important, and polite that the time to give be made clear so that people are not uncomfortable about it.

People can stay and eat and ask questions of COLAGE/LGPA if they wish. Once people start leaving, our volunteers will help with clean-up.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jared", is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

Follow-up phone call:

- 1) if they can do it, thank them. Ask if they can talk now, if not, call back.
- 2) Set a date for the party, start by recommending some (have that ready. Stefan will keep a master list, please check w/him before making a date.)
- 3) Set a date for a personal meeting with them about 6 weeks before the party date.

Personal meeting:

- 1) ask them on the phone before the meeting to have their address book, rolodex, whatever.
- 2) This is to go over the guest list, get a copy
- 3) ask if we can keep a copy of the list so we don't invite the same people to future parties
- 4) give them info to answer questions with,
- 5) go over the look and feel of the an invitation design, get them to draw a map to their house.
- 6) Give menu suggestions.
- 7) walk through the party
- 8) talk about the pitch,
- 9) getting them to identify skills,
- 10) providing them a form to record RSVPs.

Deadlines

6 weeks before: meet with host, assemble guest list

4 weeks before: show invitation to host,

3 weeks before: send out invitation

1 week before : confirm with host, ask how many people have RSVP'd (does host need to make follow up calls?), make sure they have skills, confirm TV and VCR.

2 days before: call to check in, see how its going

Day of: bring TV, VCR if needed, bring video, envelopes for donations and written material about COLAGE/LGPA. Show up 1/2 hour early to prepare.

After party: help host clean up, tally donations and thank host. Get any information on donators we don't have, from host.

within a few days: write thank-you note to host and all donators.

within a week: Call host and go over the party with them, see if they have any lingering resentments, suggestions on how to do it better.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COLAGE, Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere, is the only national organization run by and for the daughters and sons of lesbians and gay men. Our 600+ members represent only a tiny fraction of the 6 to 14 million Americans with lesbian and gay parents. We know first hand that the judgment in the Bottoms family case was inaccurate, prejudiced, and does not reflect the reality of growing up with a lesbian mother.

While studies and our own experiences show no bad effects of growing up with lesbian and gay parents, the secrecy many of us must maintain because of custody cases like the Bottoms' is a burden. The irony of this judgment "in the best interests of the child," is that cases like these cause the most problems for us.

Our hearts go out to *<insert the name of the Bottoms kid here>* Bottoms. We all have experienced some type of negative reaction to our families; custody rulings based on the sexuality of our parents are simply an extreme form. Fortunately this case does not reflect the positive trends in courts and other institutions towards our families, trends which COLAGE believes will continue as more and more Americans realize that children aren't raised by their parents' sexual orientation, they are raised by their parents' love.

COLAGE
3023 North Clark
Box 121
Chicago, IL 60657
(202) 583-8029

Hey COLAGE and COLAGE-friendly folk!

12/8/93

Things here in San Francisco are wet, but still better than anything the East has to offer. I've been here four months, which in this transitory city makes me a native.

Surprisingly, there are hardly any networks of daughters and sons of lesbian and gay parents here. There are some groups for very young kids, and there is a doctor who runs a support group for adolescents, but she's having a lot of trouble. This lack of groups here, and the demand elsewhere, has prompted me to work up a short guide on how to start and run groups for kids with gay parents.

Enclosed is the almost-ready document. This is partly adapted from a similar publication by GLPCI, and partly adapted from responses to questionnaires we sent to groups over a year ago. The graphic on the front and the picture on page 9 are not the final graphic and picture, we're still waiting on those.

I'm looking for feedback on ALL aspects of this, from the content to the design, before I make multiple copies of this. What should go on page 12?, etc. The main purpose of the publication is to help and encourage any English speaking person (anyone up for doing a culturally-sensitive translation?) to start a group in their area for kids. People who are already running groups may find some of it helpful also, and any ideas on how it could better help existing groups are especially appreciated.

So if you could take a few minutes to look this over and record your ideas, it would be very helpful.

Please send all comments/ideas/corrections to:

Stefan Lynch
1040 Dolores St. #106
San Francisco, CA
94110
(415) 206-1930

Thanks!





COLAGE (Children Of Lesbians And Gays Everywhere)

3543 18th St., #17 San Francisco, CA 94110 phone: 415.861.5437 fax: 415.255.8345
Director@COLAGE.org www.COLAGE.org

Dear Friend,

We recently met at a conference and you requested further information about COLAGE, Children Of Lesbians And Gays Everywhere. COLAGE is an international organization working to promote a more celebratory and accepting world for sons and daughters of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (lgbt) parents. We are the only international organization dedicated to serving this constituency; furthermore, we actively affirm the rights of all children and their families. We are a youth driven organization with a focus on peer empowerment; we believe that those influenced by the experience of having at least one lgbt parent are best suited to support and advocate on behalf of one another. COLAGE has over twenty affiliates across North America with whom we provide support, education, and advocacy for kids of all ages, backgrounds, and needs who share the bond of having lgbt parents.

Growing up in San Francisco with a lesbian mom and a gay dad who is HIV+, I was never aware of the thousands of others whose lives have been influenced by their lgbt parent(s); in fact, I assumed no one could have a family like mine. Since becoming involved with COLAGE, the experience of meeting other sons and daughters of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender parents has changed my life tremendously. Our experiences differ: there's twelve year-old Maraya who has been raised since birth by her two mothers, Mike in Seattle whose father didn't come out until he was nineteen, and Sarah in Canada who also has a lesbian mom and a gay father. Despite our differences, we are able to share our experiences, support one another, and work proactively on issues affecting our families and us.

The children we serve vary in age, background, and experience; yet COLAGE helps connect and build community among them. Some, with the support of COLAGE have realized for the first time in their lives that they are not alone. There are young kids facing harassment in their schools, dealing with HIV and AIDS, coping with isolation, or resolving their own sexuality. We share these experiences with each other, good and bad. COLAGE offers opportunities to become involved nationally and locally with issues affecting us and our families. Many people just like to know that COLAGE exists. I hope you will find a way to become involved in COLAGE; we depend on the support and involvement of people like you to provide our services and affect change while fostering the growth of children of lgbt parents. We could not do this work without the financial support of our members.

If you are interested in joining COLAGE, please return the membership portion of the enclosed brochure. Joining COLAGE automatically subscribes you to our quarterly publication, "Just For Us," a source of support and communication between young people with lgbt parents. As a member you will also gain access to our exciting programs including:

- ❖ COLAGE Connections- pen pal program
- ❖ Membership discounts on COLAGE merchandise
- ❖ Kids Club, a national club for youth under 12
- ❖ Resource and information referral services
- ❖ Two email discussion groups
- ❖ Annual, national conference
- ❖ Local chapter meetings and events

But most importantly, your donation and membership to COLAGE will support the critical work we perform on behalf of children of lgbt parents and their families. Your support is essential to the survival of COLAGE and in the fight to gain justice for all children and their families, especially since there is no other organization doing our vital work.

There are unlimited possibilities for your involvement in our organization; significantly, your input and participation help shape COLAGE and ensure its survival. Please check out our home page located at www.colage.org to find out more about our organization and its programs. I hope you will like what you see. If you have any questions, please contact us at (415) 861-5437.

Love Makes a Family!

Felicia Park-Rogers
Director

P.S. The cost to COLAGE for sending this information to you is about \$5.00. Any donation you can make to help us keep information like this available to anyone who requests it is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your help.

SUPPORT

Our members know they are not alone. We foster connections between them, and affirm that love makes a family.

Support Groups. We work to start and support local groups for kids and young adults.

Annual Conference. We bring together over a hundred kids of all ages.

COLAGE Kids Club. Quarterly FunPages filled with engaging activities, membership cards and more — all for young kids.



Just For Us Newsletter. By and for teenagers.

Second Generation. A newsletter for lesbian and gay daughters and sons of lesbian and gay parents.

Pen Pals. We connect kids from across North America and around the world.

COLAGE

3543 18th St. #17
San Francisco, CA 94110 USA
415-861-KIDS www.colage.org
colage@colage.org

ADVOCACY

We are working to increase the visibility, rights and acceptance of children with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered parents.

Media. We work to connect members of the media with a variety of people who have lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered parents.

Courts. We provide fact sheets and testimony in custody cases on behalf of the best interests of children.

Speakers. COLAGE members are available to speak at your meeting, place of worship, school...anywhere.

Theater. We sponsor productions that entertain and educate on issues relating to our families.

Videos. COLAGE has sponsored several videos for our families, educators, and general public.

Publications. Our newsletters and fact sheets provide information and updates on our families and the challenges facing them.



MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth: "Gay people don't have kids."

Fact: The American Bar Association estimates there are eight to ten million daughters and sons of lesbian and gay parents.

Myth: "Kids are badly damaged by the teasing they face in school for having gay parents."

Fact: Dozens of researchers have found no significant psychological differences between children with lesbian and gay parents and children with straight parents.

Myth: "If your parent is gay, then you will be too."

Fact: Kids with gay parents are no more likely to be gay than kids with straight parents.

Myth: "If I tell my friends about my mom being transsexual, they won't be my friends any more."

Fact: Sometimes friends will react badly, but many people are accepting. The benefits of telling are usually worth the risks.

For more information, contact COLAGE



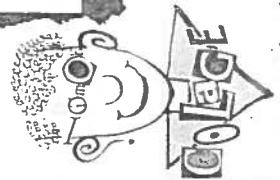
2300 Market St. #165
San Francisco, CA 94114
USA

a project of GLPCI

Children of LESBIANS AND GAYS Everywhere!



An international organization for daughters and sons of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered parents



NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
PERMIT #3846

printing donated by Seneca Printing, Raytown, MO

YES! I want to be part of COLAGE

I would like more information on:

- COLAGE Kids Chib
- Pen Pals
- Local groups for daughters and sons
- Starting/running COLAGE groups
- Resources for adult daughters and sons
- Resources for parents/GLPCI
- Other _____

I would like to receive:

- Just For Us Newsletter (quarterly) \$10/yr
- 2nd Generation Newsletter (bi-annual) \$5/yr
- I have enclosed addresses of people who may be interested in learning about COLAGE no one will be turned away for lack of funds

I want to help COLAGE do more good work.

Enclosed is my additional donation of:

- \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____

Child(ren)'s name(s). Please print _____

Parent(s) name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov _____

Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Birthdate of child(ren) (M/D/Y) _____

Please make checks/money orders in US\$ to:

COLAGE
3543 18th St. #17
San Francisco, CA 94110 USA
415-861-KIDS www.colage.org
colage@colage.org
Love makes a family!

ab