



Coalition des familles homoparentales

NEWSLETTER - VOLUME XII - No. II – December 2010

“La Belle Province”

*By Mona Greenbaum
Director LGBT Family Coalition*

You can't miss it. There are a huge number of immigrants from France that have joined the LGBT Family Coalition recently. In our workshops for future parents, for instance, of the 81 people registered last fall, about a third were from France. And this year, eight of our 17 board members are French!

What's going on? Well for one, they are helping to contribute to the huge baby boom that is going on in our community. I decided to meet up with some of them to find out what were their motivations for coming here in the first place, and to see whether or not Quebec was living up to their expectations. Quebecers have always had a funny relation with our French cousins: part admiration, part disdain. So I wanted to see what *they* thought about *us*.

It's a given that the laws that offer full legal recognition to families with same-sex parents make Quebec an attractive destination. Obviously that's one of the motivating factors for gays and lesbians to come here. But there are a number of other equally important reasons.

The economic situation in France is becoming increasingly difficult. It's harder to get a job now, and even if you do, the average salary in France barely covers what is more easily obtained here. It's well known that it's less expensive to live in Quebec. A number of the couples I met already had bought a house or apartment. “We would never have afforded a house like this in France,” was a frequent refrain.

“In France even if you have a higher diploma,” says Stéphanie, who arrived from Paris about 5 years ago, “a lot depends on who you know and what connections you have. Getting a job is never straightforward.”

Immigration to Quebec depends on a point system and sometimes an individual who may not have enough points to succeed alone can be accepted when part of a couple. “Quebec makes absolutely no distinction if you are a same-sex or an opposite-sex couple,” says Jeanne, originally from Bretagne, “They just add up the points.”

Increasing the birth rate, especially with children who will grow up speaking French, is something that the Quebec government is actually looking for when they screen potential immigrants. If you are a couple with plans to move here and procreate, straight or gay that will probably get you points.

What other factors are important? “The language is obviously a big thing,” says Zvezdan who immigrated from Lyon with his partner Thierry, “but also what skills you have.” Quebec actually has a zealous immigration recruitment program going on in France. In fact, to my surprise, everyone I spoke to told me that they had seen publicity postcards, posters, magazine articles and had even attended conferences, all touting the merits of moving to *la Belle Province*.

The Quebec government agencies that promote immigration in France present Quebec in an extremely positive light. So much so that some people will come here thinking that they will find a North-American

France. “All the positive points of France, but with more opportunity, a greater openness to others, less aggression. A new improved version. Like a France 2.0,” Zvezdan quipped.

Add to this the fact that many are highly disillusioned about France. Not only is the economic situation a mess, but also right-wing extremism is on the rise and racial tensions are rife. Immigrants in France are often not well integrated into French society. They don’t get the good jobs. They’re not considered fully French even if the family has been there for generations. This exclusion leads to poverty and poverty leads to frustration, aggression and crime. This of course reinforces racist stereotypes. A vicious cycle.

“In general,” Zvezdan says, “there is a feeling of aggression and tension in France. You feel it on the streets and in the supermarkets. It amazed us how polite and calm everyone in Quebec was.”

Jeanne, in Quebec City, arrived here in the middle of the Bouchard-Taylor commission. “It’s almost an obsession with Quebecers. Maybe it goes too far sometimes, but in general Quebecers are quite open to other cultures. And definitely they are more open to gays and lesbians.”

But some are deceived. They arrive here and the Promised Land is not what they thought it would be. The American dream fails to materialise. If they are not working for the French government or a French company based in Quebec, they may find out that they have to settle for a job for which they are over-qualified or a salary lower than what their colleagues receive because “You don’t know how it works here in North America.”

Also, are Quebecers really as friendly as the French stereotype would have it? Cécile and Emmanuelle, answer an emphatic “Yes. When we arrived Manu quickly found a job in a small family-run business in old Montreal and the family practically adopted us. They helped us to find a place to live, they helped us get furniture, and they even taught us Quebecois expressions.”

Everyone had a funny story to tell about the proverbial France-Quebec communication gap. When Stéphanie and her partner Florence were offered a “cabaret” (tray) at Tim Horton’s they were a bit surprised, as in France those usually come with can-can girls. And Zvezdan quickly learned not to use the word “gosses” for children as they do in France, because here it is slang for testicles!

Aside from the language entanglements, sometimes it’s not so easy to make friends here. Some say Quebecers have their circle of friends and it’s very hard to break into these cliques. Cécile said, “We had to make a conscious effort not to fall into the ‘ex-pat trap’. We’ve seen it so often. French people that come here and are always comparing everything to how it was in France. They sit around with their French friends and commiserate that things were better back home.” Although many French come here, there is a high rate of return.

After 11 years, Cécile and Emmanuelle have as many Quebecois friends as they have friends from all different cultures, but in the beginning they made a conscious effort to avoid falling into the trap of only socializing with other French nationals.

Jeanne says that community life is great in Quebec. She claims that we’re well organized and perhaps without consciously knowing it, we are helping these immigrants learn to fit in. By joining the coalition and other organisations she and her partner Florence have seen their circle of friends widen.

“Sometimes it’s still hard though. We miss our home and it’s some of the little everyday things that can really make a difference. Dairy products are not the same here. We still can’t find the type of yoghurt we like after 5 years!!” says Stéphanie. But when asked if they would go back, the answer is a definite “No”.

Like Jeanne and her partner in Quebec City, Stéphanie and her partner Florence are currently going through fertility treatments, totally free of charge, because the Quebec government now covers these procedures. Their goal: emulating Cécile and Emmanuelle who are now the happy mothers of baby Charles

who was conceived through a fertility clinic in Montreal. What would be inaccessible in France and totally unaffordable elsewhere, is free and accessible in Quebec. "It's amazing!" says Jeanne. Women in France who want to conceive must go to Spain or Belgium. That's complicated and expensive.

For the men who arrive here the goal is often adoption. The process was quite straightforward for Zvezdan and Thierry who are the proud dads of a one-year-old girl soon to be adopted via the Mixed Bank program of Quebec's Youth Protection Services. The Coalition has seen a number of other French couples go through the system and adopt Quebec-born children. Most are not thinking about moving back to France, because they know that their legal rights will not be respected once they return home.

"Who knows when France will recognize families with same-sex parents," says Stéphanie, "It's probably very far off."

It looks like we will be seeing more and more French immigrants in the years to come. And that will probably help to clear up Quebecers' own misconceptions about the French. A mini survey about Quebecers' stereotypes turned up both positives and negatives: "They're always trying to teach us something," "They're much more cultured." "They're condescending," "They think they speak better than we do," "They're more stylish."

Quebec truly has a love-hate relationship with France. It's almost always a point of reference, just like the U.S. is for English Canada. "At the same time, Quebec is a culture that has evolved differently from France. Comparing Quebec and France is like apples and oranges," says Emmanuelle. "Until you come to this realisation you will always feel disappointed."

"We have things to learn from Quebec but we also have things to offer" After a bit of modest hesitation Cécile continues, "For instance, we're not always in such a rush in France. In Quebec, efficiency is so valued. It's the supreme goal. In France we have more of an attention to detail. Our cooking, the way we decorate a house, even the way we start a conversation or write an e-mail. Faster is not always better."

My conversations with our French members have touched on subjects as diverse as education, work-family conciliation, male-female roles, reasonable accommodation, politics, and of course the head scarf. Our new French members can help us reflect on who we are. And as Jeanne says, "Immigration is an experience enriching to immigrants but also to the culture that receives the immigrants. Each time we are confronted with someone who has a different experience, it's an opportunity to learn."

Interested in writing for our newsletter? Send your articles at any time to info@familleshomoparentales.org or by post to CFH, 2401 Coursol, Montreal, Quebec, H3J 1C8

News Briefs: September - November 2010

Montreal-Quebec News

October 2010 - Month of prizes for the LGBT Family Coalition

We are very pleased to announce that the LGBT Family Coalition has been honoured for its work. At the beginning of the month the Coalition received the **Caisse Desjardin's Annual Prize for Service to the Community**. The honour comes with an award of \$5000.

Later in the month, at the *Gala Arc-en-ciel* the group was awarded the **Prix Projet par excellence** for our training workshop and resource kit, "Regards sur les familles homoparentales: s'ouvrir à leurs réalités pour mieux répondre aux besoins des enfants."

The project was the result of a grant received from the Quebec's Ministry of Education. The work was carried out by the Coalition in collaboration with Dr Danielle Julien of UQAM, who helped with the scientific content of the training and resource kit. The Coalition also worked with Dr Karine Igartua, psychiatrist and director of MUSIC (McGill University Sexual Identity Centre). Karine helped to train two teams of animators in Montreal and in Quebec City who currently carry out trainings on a regular basis in schools, social and health services, as well as in community organizations.

Since the project was finalised in June 2009, over 2200 professionals have gone through the training session that helps to demystify families with gay and lesbian parents and sensitize those who work with children to the devastating effects of homophobia on all children. Trainings have been carried out in the regions of Montreal, Quebec City, Laval, Mauricie, Montérégie, Eastern Townships, Laurentians, Centre-du-Québec, Outaouais, Gaspé, Saguenay, Chaudière-Appalaches and Abitibi-Témiscamingue.

One of our biggest successes has been the training of close to 500 future teachers in the context of their undergraduate degrees.

The Coalition's director Mona Greenbaum was also honoured at the Lion d'Or, where she received the **Medal of the National Assembly** for her years of advocacy work for the LGBT community. The medal was given to Mona, in the presence of her family and hundreds of members of the LGBT community, by Mme Pauline Marois, head of the Parti Québécois.

November 3, 2010 (Canadian Press) Quebec's Court of Appeal has ruled that people who were in a common-law relationship in Quebec do have the right to sue for alimony. The court has, however, given the government one year to replace the provision in the Civil Code, anticipating it will be appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada. The decision will have far-reaching implications for Quebec couples who have never legally married.

In 2009, Quebec's Superior Court ruled against "Lola's" claim for spousal support, arguing that she should have married her boyfriend if she wanted financial security. Neither member of the couple can be named because of a publication ban protecting the privacy of their three children, but the couple has been given the nicknames 'Eric' and 'Lola' in media reports.

The current civil code in Quebec does not recognize common-law marriages, so anyone from a dissolved common-law relationship is not entitled to ask for spousal support or a share of assets; partners are required to pay child support and nothing else. However because common-law marriages are recognized elsewhere in Canada, many couples mistakenly believe they have the same rights and responsibilities as legally-wed couples.

Justice Julie Dutil wrote in the judgment that 1.2 million Quebecers were involved in common-law relationships in 2006, amounting to 34 per cent of live-in couples in the province.

Anne-France Goldwater, the lawyer for the plaintiff, hailed the judgment. She said the ruling will give common-law families the same respect, protection and benefits under the law as traditional families.

"Finally, the law recognizes common-law families as legitimate families."

As many as 60 per cent of children in Quebec are born out of wedlock. "If we don't call them bastards anymore . . . then surely their parents should not be discriminated against, surely their parents are just as legitimate as married parents."

In Quebec City, Justice Minister Jean-Marc Fournier said the government would study the decision before making any comment.

Canada News

November 3, 2010 (Ottawa) *The Gazette* - New Democrat LGBT Critic Bill Siksay's historic Private Member's Bill is one step closer to becoming law after it passed without amendments at the Justice and Human Rights Committee. The bill passed with 9 MPs supporting and two voting against.

Siksay's bill, C-389, adds gender identity and gender expression to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act and amends the hate crimes and sentencing provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada.

"This is great news," said Siksay. "This positive step in the legislative process comes after consultations with members of the transsexual and transgender community across Canada, after several versions of the bill, and after a lot of work by trans activists and allies. We are on track toward ensuring the full protection of transgender and transsexual Canadians under the law."

The bill now goes back to the House of Commons for debate and a vote at report stage and third reading. Depending on the House calendar this next step could come in December.

Gay Marriage News

August 19 (Katmandu, Nepal) A Hindu priest performs the first wedding ceremony in Nepal for a foreign gay couple, as activists and tourist agencies increasingly promote the Himalayan nation as a gay-friendly destination.

The ceremony was held in Kathmandu for Sanjay Shah, 42, a Briton from Leicester, and an Indian man who did not want to be identified, said Sunil Pant, a member of Nepal's parliament and the nation's most prominent gay activist.

The two men were not legally married because Nepal has no laws legalizing same-sex marriage and does not marry foreigners. However, marriages performed by priests are generally accepted by society and most people who live in rural areas do not register their marriages with authorities.

October 5 (Hong Kong) A transgender woman loses a legal challenge against Hong Kong marriage rules that prevent her from marrying her boyfriend.

The plaintiff underwent sex change surgery from man to woman in 2008 and obtained identification documents listing her new gender. But Hong Kong's Marriage Registry only allows couples who were men and women at birth to wed.

The woman, who is in her 20s and can only be identified as "W" under court order, argued her rights to marry in the constitution and Bill of Rights were violated. W's lawyer, Michael Vidler, said his client plans to appeal.

October 11 (Guadalajara, Mexico) The governor of Mexico's Jalisco state says gay marriages disgust him. Gov. Emilio Gonzalez says marriage should be between a man and a woman. He adds, in his words, "that other thing, as they say, still grosses me out."

Guadalajara has been a focal point of Mexico's debate over gay marriage, which sharpened after Mexico City enacted a law in December allowing same-sex couples to wed and adopt children.

November 8 (Buenos Aires) Thousands march in **Argentina's** Gay Pride parade, celebrating the country's status as the first in Latin America to legalize same-sex marriage and vow to campaign for new rights for transgender people.

More than 500 same-sex couples have been married since President Cristina Fernandez signed the law on July 21, said Esteban Paulo, President of the Argentine Lesbians, Gay, Bi, and Transgender Federation.

The gay marriage law has been a boon for tourism, said Pablo De Luca, founder of the Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce in Buenos Aires. He estimates that 100,000 more gays and lesbians have visited Argentina as a result of the law.

International News

September 2010 – Associated Press - LGBT Youth Suicides in the U.S.

- A 13-year-old Central **California** boy who was a target of taunts from classmates has died nine days after hanging himself from a tree.

Seth Walsh had been in a coma since he was found unconscious in his Tehachapi backyard **September 19**. Police Chief Jeff Kermode says investigators interviewed some of the teenagers who allegedly taunted Seth for being gay and concluded no crime was committed. Several of the taunters broke down in tears while being questioned and said they wished they had tried to stop the bullying.

- A **New Jersey** college student committed suicide the day after authorities say two fellow students surreptitiously recorded him having sex in his dorm room with another man and broadcast it over the Internet.

Tyler Clementi jumped off the George Washington Bridge. His body hasn't been recovered. The 18-year-old's driver's license and Rutgers University ID were found in a wallet left on the bridge on **September 22** after two witnesses saw someone jump from the structure, a law enforcement official told *The Associated Press*.

Two Rutgers freshmen have been charged with illegally taping Clementi having sex with another man and broadcasting the images via an Internet chat program. One of the defendants, Dharun Ravi, was Clementi's roommate. The other defendant is Molly Wei. They could face up to five years in prison if they're convicted. Steven Goldstein, chairman of the gay rights group Garden State Equality said in a statement that his group considers Clementi's death a hate crime.

"Tyler was a fine young man, and a distinguished musician," attorney Paul Mainardi said in a statement. "The family is heartbroken beyond words." Ed Schmiedecke, the recently retired music director at Ridgewood High School, where Clementi graduated earlier this year, said Clementi was a violinist whose life revolved around music. "He was a terrific musician, and a very promising, hardworking young man."

- On **September 29** Raymond Chase a student of the **Rhode Island** campus of Johnson & Wales College hung himself in his residence hall room.

"The loss of Raymond this week is the second college LGBT-related suicide in a week and the fifth teenage LGBT suicide in three weeks. The suicide of this openly gay young man is for reasons currently unknown; however, the recent pattern of LGBT youth suicides is cause for grave concern," said Shane Windmeyer, executive director and founder of Campus Pride.

Through its Q Research Institute for Higher Education, Campus Pride released its "2010 State of Higher Education for LGBT People." The in-depth research study is the most comprehensive national LGBT higher education study of its kind. Campus Pride surveyed more than 5,000 LGBT students, faculty and staff for the report. Findings demonstrate that these recent suicides and incidents of harassment are neither rare nor fleeting.

Among the findings in the report:

-One quarter (23%) of LGBQ staff, faculty, and students reported experiencing harassment (defined as any conduct that has interfered with your ability to work or learn). Almost all identified sexual identity as the basis of the harassment (83%). An even greater percentage of transgender students, faculty, & staff reported experiencing harassment (39%) with 87% identifying their gender identity/expression as the basis for the harassment. The form of the harassment experiences by transgender people was more overt and blatant.

-One-third of LGBQ (33%) and transgender (38%) students, faculty, and staff have seriously considered leaving their institution due to the challenging climate.

-More than half of all faculty, students, & staff hide their sexual identity (43%) or gender identity (63%) to avoid intimidation.

-More than a third of all transgender students, faculty, & staff(43%) and 13% of LGBQ respondents feared for their physical safety. This finding was more salient for LGBQ students and for LGBQ and/or Transgender People of Color.

For more information about Campus Pride's "2010 State of Higher Education for LGBT People" report, visit www.campuspride.org/research.

September 20, 2010 IGLHRC NEWS (Peru) The body of Alberto Osorio, 44, journalist and activist for the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, was found by his mother, Esther Castillo. Mrs. Castillo found her son's body in his apartment in the district of San Martin de Porres in northern Lima. He had been tied to his bed with a cable and bruises on his body indicated that he was beaten before being strangled.

In addition to Alberto Osorio, at least eight other gay or transgender people were murdered in 2010 in similar circumstances, according to *Boletín Diversidad*, a Peruvian organization that monitors homophobic violence. According to their human rights report, at least another seven gay or trans people were murdered in 2009. These crimes repeat the pattern used in the murder of Alberto Osorio: the perpetrator seduces the victim, enters their home and then beats, kills and robs them.

Very few of the cases of gay men and transgender people who have been murdered over the past year have resulted in criminal prosecution. According to some LGBT activists in Peru, the failure to solve and prosecute these crimes is a result of homophobic bias. In those cases that did result in prosecutions, LGBT organizations maintain that the failure to bring specific charges relating to anti-gay hate crimes has led to weak convictions for the perpetrators.

October 11, 2010 365 Gay.com (Belgrade, Serbia) A European Union official says violent anti-gay riots in Serbia could hurt the Balkan country's bid to join the bloc.

Police clashed with thousands of far-right supporters who were trying to try disrupt a gay pride march in Belgrade. About 140 people were hurt and 200 were arrested.

Jelko Kacin, in charge of the European Parliament's evaluation reports on Serbia, says the anti-gay riots "show an elementary lack" of tolerance for minority rights in Serbia and the "inefficiency" of the state in preventing such a trend.

The gay pride march was viewed as a test for Serbia's government as it seeks EU membership.

October 12, 2010 365 Gay.com (Riverside, Calif.) A federal judge has issued an injunction stopping enforcement of the American military's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy, ending the 17-year-old ban on openly gay troops. U.S. District Judge Virginia Phillips' landmark ruling also ordered the government to suspend and discontinue all pending discharge proceedings and investigations under the policy.

U.S. Department of Justice attorneys have 60 days to appeal. Pentagon and Department of Justice officials said they are reviewing the case and had no immediate comment.

The injunction goes into effect immediately, said Dan Woods, the attorney who represented the Log Cabin Republicans, the gay rights group that filed the lawsuit in 2004 to stop the ban's enforcement.

"Don't ask, don't tell, as of today at least, is done, and the government is going to have to do something now to resurrect it," Woods said. "This is an extremely significant, historic decision. Once and for all, this failed policy is stopped. Fortunately now we hope all Americans who wish to serve their country can."

Legal experts say the Obama administration is under no legal obligation to appeal and could let Phillips' ruling stand.

October 19 (Kampala, Uganda) The front-page newspaper story featured a list of Uganda's 100 "top" homosexuals, with a bright yellow banner across it that read: "Hang Them." Alongside their photos were the men's names and addresses.

In the days since it was published, at least four gay Ugandans on the list have been attacked and many others are in hiding, according to rights activist Julian Onziema. One person named in the story had stones thrown at his house by neighbors.

A lawmaker in this conservative African country introduced a bill a year ago that would have imposed the death penalty for some homosexual acts and life in prison for others. An international uproar ensued, and the bill was quietly shelved. But gays in Uganda say they have faced a year of harassment and attacks since the bill's introduction. The legislation was drawn up following a visit by leaders of U.S. conservative Christian ministries that promote therapy they say allows gays to become heterosexual.

"Before the introduction of the bill in parliament most people did not mind about our activities. But since then, we are harassed by many people who hate homosexuality," said Patrick Ndede, 27. "The publicity the bill got made many people come to know about us and they started mistreating us."

More than 20 homosexuals have been attacked over the last year in Uganda, and an additional 17 have been arrested and are in prison, said Frank Mugisha, the chairman of *Sexual Minorities Uganda*. Those numbers are up from the same period two years ago, when about 10 homosexuals were attacked, he said.

The article in a Ugandan newspaper called *Rolling Stone* – not the American magazine – came out five days before the one-year anniversary of the controversial legislation. The article claimed that an unknown but deadly disease was attacking homosexuals in Uganda, and said that gays were recruiting 1 million children by raiding schools, a common smear used in Uganda.

The paper's managing editor, Giles Muhame, said the article was "in the public interest."

October 20, 2010 (Washington) The Obama administration asked a federal appeals court to immediately suspend a judge's ruling that overturned the military's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy on gays.

The government says it wants the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit in San Francisco to take action right away. The federal government is preparing arguments for the appeals court on why the ruling on "Don't ask, don't tell" should be suspended while the case is appealed.

The government says that letting the ruling of U.S. District Judge Virginia Phillips to go forward immediately would be a major problem for the military. President Barack Obama has said he supports repeal of the law, but wants Congress – not the courts – to decide its fate. He also has agreed to the military's request that it be given more time to implement any changes.

Miscellaneous News

August 31, 2010 There has been a number of gay characters in comic books since *Marvel Comics* opened the door with Northstar in 1992. But now a new level of acceptance has been reached: comic series, Archie, has added its first gay character.

On September 1, Riverdale High was introduced to Kevin Keller, the hunky gay blonde with a V-neck and perfectly coiffed hair. Archie Comics CEO, John Goldwater said, "The introduction of Kevin is just about keeping the world of Archie Comics current and inclusive. Archie's hometown of Riverdale has always been a safe world for everyone."

Kevin first appeared in Veronica #202. His first story line solidifies his sexuality, finding a polite way to turn down the persistent come-ons of Veronica. Kevin even entices Jughead by challenging him to a burger-eating contest at Pop's Chocklit Shoppe. The introduction of Kevin Keller marks the first gay character in the series' 69-year history.

November 10, 2010 *Huffington Post* (Los Angeles) The Williams Institute, a research center on sexual orientation law and public policy at UCLA School of Law, has announced new findings from the U.S. National Longitudinal Lesbian Family Study (NLLFS), the longest-running study ever conducted on American lesbian families (now in its 24th year). In an article published in the Archives of Sexual Behavior, the 17-year-old daughters and sons of lesbian mothers were asked about sexual abuse, sexual orientation, and sexual behavior.

The paper found that none of the 78 NLLFS adolescents reports having ever been physically or sexually abused by a parent or other caregiver. This contrasts with 26 percent of American adolescents who report parent or caregiver physical abuse and 8.3 percent who report sexual abuse. According to the authors, "the absence of child abuse in lesbian mother families is particularly noteworthy, because victimization of children is pervasive and its consequences can be devastating. To the extent that our findings are replicated by other researchers, these reports from adolescents with lesbian mothers have implications for healthcare professionals, policymakers, social service agencies, and child protection experts who seek family models in which violence does not occur."

On sexual orientation, 2.8 percent of the NLLFS adolescents identified as predominantly to exclusively homosexual.

The study was conducted by Nanette Gartrell, M.D., Henny Bos, Ph.D. (University of Amsterdam), and Naomi Goldberg, M.P.P. (Williams Institute). Principal investigator Nanette Gartrell, M.D., is a 2010 Williams Distinguished Scholar, an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at UCSF, and affiliated with the University of Amsterdam.

September 2010 – Wonderful Web Site!

Many LGBT youth can't picture what their lives might be like as openly gay adults. They can't imagine a future for themselves. For too long, LGBT youth have been forced to struggle through their formative years suffering from bullies in their schools, churches and homes — and with no support system to provide them any help.

Noted writer and media pundit Dan Savage founded the *It Gets Better Project* in September 2010 as a unique way for supporters everywhere to tell LGBT Youth that — **it gets better**.

Closed-minded school administrators and parents may not let LGBT adults talk directly to their children about their futures, but the site doesn't have to get permission to tell kids that life gets better. That's why they are compiling a video archive to share the stories of people overcoming bullying and finding happiness.

ItGetsBetterProject.com is a place where young people who are gay, lesbian, bi, or trans can see with their own eyes how love and happiness can be a reality in their future. It's a place where LGBT adults can

share the stories of their lives, and straight allies can add their names in solidarity and help spread our message of hope.

News from the LGBT Family Coalition UPCOMING MEETINGS

DECEMBER 2010:

☐ **Sunday December 5th from 2 – 6 p.m.**

MONTREAL: FOR ALL ADULTS AND KIDS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY: ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

THE LGBT Family Coalition invites you to our annual holiday party! There will be two performances: Fredolini the Clown-Magician, and the Extravaganze LGBT Choir. Activities and crafts for kids and adults alike. For our buffet please bring along something good to share with others. You can bring anything you like in the categories of either **salad, main dish, dessert or beverage (e.g. juice or soft-drinks)**. Please do not bring anything with peanuts onto the premises because of allergies.

Location: Centre Greene, 1090 Greene Ave (Metro Atwater). Greene Avenue is a few blocks west of Atwater. The centre is south of René Levesque / Dorchester.

☐ **Thursday December 9th from 5:30– 8 p.m.**

QUEBEC CITY: HOLIDAY PARTY

GRIS-Quebec, GLBT-Quebec and the Quebec-City Branch of the LGBT Family Coalition invite you to a Community Christmas Party!

Location: 363, de la Couronne - bureau 202, Quebec (Quebec)

To reserve, please contact Dominique Stibre before Friday December 3rd at (418) 523-5572 or by e-mail: l_acces@grisquebec.org

JANUARY 2011:

☐ **Friday, January 14 at 7:00 p.m.**

NEW CAFÉ - THEME NIGHTS: PARENTS OF TEENS: EVOLUTION OR REVOLUTION?

Raising a teenager? Do you have the feeling sometimes that you're losing your bearings? Having a hard time communicating? Where is that sweet and easy-going child I used to have? Does being a gay parent add another dimension to this? Come and take some time and get some perspective with us. Let's share our tricks and use our sense of humour, around a cup of coffee. Come and recharge your batteries. Open to members and non-members.

Location: UQAM 320 Ste Catherine East (Métro Berri), Room DS-2901

☐ **Tuesday, January 18 at 6:30 p.m.**

QUEBEC CITY: COURSE FOR FUTURE PARENTS – PART 1: HOW TO FORM A FAMILY / LEGAL QUESTIONS

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FORM FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS.

Location: GRIS-Quebec: 363 rue De la Couronne, Québec (Quebec) www.grisquebec.org

☐ **Thursday, January 27 at 7:00 p.m.**

MONTREAL: COURSE FOR FUTURE MOTHERS - PART 3: DIFFERENT TYPES OF FAMILIES (FOR WOMEN)

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FORM FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS.

Location: UQAM 320 Ste Catherine East (Métro Berri), Room DS-2901

FEBRUARY 2011:

□ **Wednesday, February 9th at 7:00 p.m.**

MONTREAL: COURSE FOR FUTURE MOTHERS - PART 4: THE ROLLER COASTER : BEFORE AND AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF YOUR CHILD!

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FORM FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS.

Location: UQAM 320 Ste Catherine East (Métro Berri), Room DS-2901

□ **Saturday February 12th from 2– 5 p.m.**

MONTREAL: VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY FOR ALL ADULTS AND KIDS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY
THE LGBT Family Coalition invites you to our afternoon T-Dance, Valentine's Party!

Where: Café République, 1200 Peel St, Montreal

Buffet

Animation and music

Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids, but donations are always appreciated!

□ **Monday February 21st at 6:30 p.m.**

QUEBEC CITY: COURSE FOR FUTURE PARENTS – PART 2: ADOPTING CHILDREN

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FORM FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS.

Location: GRIS-Quebec: 363 rue De la Couronne, Québec www.grisquebec.org

BULLETIN BOARD:

♦ **La Marg'Elle** est un groupe pour femmes homosexuelles et bisexuelles affilié à la Maison des Femmes des Bois-Francis. Briser l'isolement, favoriser l'échange, l'identification et l'affirmation de soi.

Info: margelleboisfrancis@hotmail.com

www.lamargelle.spaces.live.com

819-758-3384

♦ **Dorshei Emet B'nei Mitzvah Program:** Do you have children entering grade 6? We offer a meaningful program in which children discover the relevance of their Jewish heritage. Dorshei Emet is a welcoming Synagogue to individuals and families of all backgrounds, and to interfaith and LGBTQ families. **514-486-9400 (Alys Geiger)**, www.dorshei-emet.com, or drop in anytime to Saturday morning Shabbat services, 10h00 to 12h15, and stay for a light lunch and meet some of the members!

♦ **Le Centre des femmes de Rivière-des-Prairies! 514-648-1030** - Nous sommes ouvertes aux lesbiennes! Si vous avez besoin de plus d'informations vous pouvez consulter notre site web : www.cdfrdp.qc.ca ainsi que le site de notre regroupement : www.rcentres.qc.ca/propos.html

♦ **L'Écho des femmes de la Petite Patrie** est un centre de femmes qui offre des rencontres pour lesbiennes. Ces rencontres ont lieu les lundis soirs aux deux semaines de 19h00 à 21h30, et sont animées par une personne ressource. Ces rencontres, qui se veulent un lieu d'échange, de ressourcement et d'information, s'intéressent aux réalités et aux conditions de vie des lesbiennes. Les rencontres sont en français. Un service de halte-garderie est disponible avec réservation faite une semaine à l'avance. Le centre est situé au **6032 St-Hubert (métro Beaubien)**. Téléphone (514)277-7445, télécopieur (514)277-1689

MISCELLANEOUS

♦ **Traducteurs, rédacteurs, etc.:** Nous sommes à la recherche de bénévoles pour la traduction française de ce bulletin. Toute contribution (même à raison d'une page ou deux par mois) est la bienvenue. Si vous êtes disponible, veuillez nous contacter : info@familleshomoparentales.org

♦ **Batshaw Youth and Family Centres** is encouraging English speaking and bilingual gay and lesbian couples, and singles, to consider becoming **foster parents**. There are babies, pre-schoolers and older children who are waiting for a foster home. For some the plan will be to help them return to their families. For other children, the plan will be to work toward **adoption**. What a remarkable feeling it is to know you have made a difference in the life of a child by providing a stable, safe and loving environment. For more information, please call, **Rena Rubin, Foster Care Recruiter, at 932-7161, local 416, or send an e-mail to rena_rubin@ssss.gouv.qc.ca**

♦ The **Open Book Library's** collection includes over 5500 books written by LGBT authors or by authors who write about our communities. Some of these books are for children and adolescents. We are very proud that approximately half of our collection is in French. Much more information as well as online consultation of the book collection is available at our Web site www.ccglm.org/en-b. We are located at **2075 Plessis (CCGLM)** in the Village. Come visit us! Open Wednesdays and Fridays from 1-8 p.m. (514) 528-8424.

♦ **The Kid Scoop: The all-in-one reference for kids activities.** www.kidscoop.com

The bulletin board is a free forum for members to communicate amongst each other. If you want to post an announcement in the next issue please send it to us at any time to info@familleshomoparentales.org or by post to CFH, 2401 Coursol, Montreal, Quebec, H3J 1C8. If you have something to advertise, sell, rent or buy...anything where money must change hands, you can place an ad in the newsletter. Ads cost 20 cents per word.

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♦ We're putting the "real" in real estate! We don't have big hair and Gucci shoes, just a down-to-earth knowledge of the market. We know how important the right home is to your family. If you're thinking of buying or selling a house or condo anywhere in the city, we can help. **Mary Lamey (514-978-6522) and Amy Barratt (514-718-6522), affiliated real estate agents and proud lesbian mums.**

♦ Photographe professionnelle pour mariages, maternité, portraits, familles. Membre de la CFH. Contactez-moi pour plus de renseignements. **Marie-Andrée Boivin 514-273-9658** marieandreeboivin@yahoo.ca
www.maphotographe.com

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