



# Coalition des familles homoparentales

## LGBT Family Coalition

### NEWSLETTER - VOLUME XV - No. II – December 2013

#### **Presentation on Assisted Procreation for the Ministry of Health**

*by Mona Greenbaum, executive director, LGBT Family Coalition*

In April 2013 the provincial Health and Well-Being Commission was given a mandate from the Ministry of Health to produce an advisory paper on assisted procreation in Quebec. To accomplish this task the commission called for a public consultation. The LGBT Family Coalition responded by submitting two briefs.

The first of these was written in collaboration with Dr. Karine Igartua, president of the *Association des médecins psychiatres du Québec* and director of McGill University's Sexual Identity Centre, as well as with Me Marie-France Bureau, professor in the law faculty of the *Université de Sherbrooke*. The second brief was written in collaboration with the Fédération du Québec pour le planning des naissances (FQPN).

We were invited to present our briefs in person to the Health and Well-Being Commission in September 2013.

In relation to our brief with the FQPN, we recommended to the commission:

- 1) That the Ministry of Health invest public funds into the causes and prevention of infertility.
- 2) That the Ministry of Health put into place a provincial registry with the goal of analyzing the short and long-term medical impacts of assisted procreation on the women who undergo these treatments, as well as on their offspring. The registry would also follow the success rates of various technologies. The accumulated data should be made accessible to both researchers and to the public at large.
- 3) That a procedure for gamete donation be put in place that would allow for a choice between anonymous and open-identity sperm and egg donors, so that our children would have access to information regarding their origins.
- 4) That the Ministry of Health put into place a centralized state-run provincial registry for gamete donors so that we and our children would have access to the donors' medical and genetic information.

As for the brief that we wrote with Dr. Igartua and Me Bureau we focused on a very precise subject: the admissibility criteria for assisted procreation.

The brief was written in reaction to media interventions concerning the publicly-funded assisted procreation programme.

In a number of newspaper articles it was suggested that single women and same-sex couples should not have access to the public system because we do not suffer from medical problems, but rather a 'social infertility'. In order to decrease the cost of this public programme it was suggested that fertility treatments should only be reserved for heterosexual infertile couples.

The argument is faulty for the following reasons:

1. *Withdrawing access of lesbians and single women to the public programme will not significantly reduce the costs of this programme.* With regards to this, LGBT Family Coalition members recently spoke with Dr. Michael Dahan, a fertility specialist at the Royal Victoria Hospital. According to Dr. Dahan, lesbians who use

fertility treatments do not contribute significantly to government expenses because the majority simply need intra-uterine inseminations, a very low-cost procedure. Also lesbians represent only a small portion of the patients that use fertility services.

2. *The capacity to have or to not have a child is not a medical condition but rather a choice.* This is as true for lesbians and single women as it is for heterosexual couples. If one generalizes the argument of our healthcare system covering only inherent medical problems (and not problems resulting from personal choices), then treatments for smokers should not be covered, nor should those related to over-eating or extreme sports. Should we penalise those that need certain treatments because they choose to live in a certain way? Currently there are many medical treatments that address the consequences of personal considerations and not illness.

3. *Withdrawing access of lesbians would disproportionately reduce our possibilities of having children, relative to heterosexual couples.* Heterosexual infertile couples have a number of options for adopting children, but these options are much more limited for gays and lesbians. International adoption is very difficult because of the laws in various countries with adoptable children. Even though local adoption is open to gays and lesbians, the number of adoptable children is limited. Also the adoption process through the Mixed Bank Programme has become increasingly complicated over the years.

4. *Lesbians that are refused access to regular and free services will put their health at risk in order to have a child through a parallel non-medical system.* The lack of access to assisted procreation would lead many women, especially those at the end of their fertile years, to desperate measures. They will ask acquaintances and even strangers to become sperm donors. Certain women would publish announcements in newspapers or on the Internet to have access to sperm donors. The men that accept to help these women have not necessarily been adequately screened for sexually transmitted or blood-borne infections, contrary to donors that are used in the fertility clinics. Women inseminated with sperm carrying HIV or another infection risk being infected and infecting their babies as well.

5. *Refusing lesbians access to fertility clinics will once again create a discriminatory system.* The Coalition worked for many years so that lesbians could have access to fertility treatments. It was in 2002, with the support of Quebec's government, that our families were finally recognized and clinics opened their doors to our members. Presently the Quebec government legally recognizes our families and does not permit, thanks to Quebec's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, any discrimination based on sexual orientation. Creating a system where only heterosexuals can have access to parenting would send a denigrating message to the LGBT community that our families don't have the same value as other families.

We live in a progressive society that is known worldwide for its acceptance of sexual diversity and its legal rights for sexual minorities. Relegating families with LGBT parents to the status of second-class citizens in limiting our access to healthcare services will be equivalent to adopting a hypocritical attitude particularly in the context of our national policy and action plan against homophobia.

We hope that the remarks that we heard in the media are not the government's point of view. These kinds of remarks are reductive and discriminatory.

We hope as well that the government will maintain its openness to the LGBT community in all domains, including assisted procreation. The only justifiable reason, from an ethical standpoint, to restrict access to assisted procreation is one founded on the well being of the child. Dr. Karine Igartua presented research on homoparental families that consists of hundreds of studies on the parental capacity of gays and lesbians and on the well being of children in these families.

We hope as well that the government will consider the importance of putting into place a legal framework to encompass the practice of surrogacy, as mentioned in our brief. For gay men in Quebec, surrogacy is the only way to have children that are genetically linked. Me Bureau explained how the current judicial void to this effect disadvantages egg donors, gestational carriers (surrogates), the intended parents and most of all their children.

The commission's report will be published in March 2014.

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Interested in writing for our newsletter? Send your articles at any time to [info@familleshomoparentales.org](mailto:info@familleshomoparentales.org) or by post to CFH, 110, rue Sainte-Thérèse, bureau 405, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1E6  
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## News Briefs: August – November 2013

### Quebec News

**September 2013** - The Centre for Gender Advocacy, an independent, Concordia University student-funded organization that promotes gender equality and empowerment, is trying to make the procedure for changing one's legal gender easier. According to the Quebec Civil Code, anyone who wishes to change their gender marker—represented by the little M or F on their identification cards—must first undergo sexual reassignment surgery, vaginoplasty for trans women or a hysterectomy for trans men. These surgeries are covered by Medicare, but the associated costs are not. They must also hold Canadian citizenship and be at least 18 years old.

In a complaint filed with the Quebec Commission for Human Rights and Youth Rights on August 11, the Centre calls for ending the surgical modification requirement, opening the process to non-citizens, and reducing the minimum age to 14, or younger with parental consent. To pay for legal expenses, the Centre has started a funding campaign. So far, it has raised nearly \$1,900 of its \$6,000 goal.

Gabrielle Bouchard, Peer Support and Trans Advocacy Coordinator at the Centre, says, “The prerequisite for surgery amounts to forced sterilization. Some people do want body modification, but others don't. At the end of the day, the only similarity between those two [surgeries] is that you can't make babies.”

In June, just before breaking for the summer, the National Assembly was considering a bill that would make it easier for trans people to change their gender markers. Bill 35 would have eliminated the requirement to publish a notice of one's name change and personal address in the National Assembly's official gazette and a local newspaper. The bill was poised for adoption, but was delayed at the last minute by a Liberal filibuster. A spokesperson for the Ministry of Justice said consultations on the bill would resume in the fall.

### Canada News

**August 21** - The Alberta Court of Appeal has recognized a gay man as the parent of a 10-year-old child that he didn't biologically father. The landmark decision put an end to a messy seven-year custody battle between the man, Mr. H, whose full name has been withheld to protect the child; his partner and the biological father of the child, Mr. R; and the birth mother, Ms. D. In his fight to be declared a legal guardian of the child, Mr. H claimed that Alberta legislation discriminated against him based on his gender and sexual orientation because provincial law determined legal male parentage on the existence of a spousal or common-law relationship with the birth mother.

According to the custody arrangement made between the adults — which was never formalized in writing — it was agreed that the child born to Ms. D through assisted conception with Mr. R's sperm would be given to Mr. R and Mr. H. The gay men raised the girl for the first three years of her life, with Ms. D and her partner, Ms. C, having regular contact with the child. But when the men separated in 2006, the biological parents drew up a new agreement making them legal guardians of the child, with Mr. R having primary custody. Mr. H was denied access to the child.

Mr. H argued that, in denying him standing as the second father, the law was discriminatory. The court agreed, and Justice Suzanne Bensler determined that the Domestic Relations Act, in effect at the time of

the child's birth, infringed on Mr. H's Charter rights. "The Act failed to contemplate parenting situations involving same-sex couples, and as such, the applicant was denied the benefit of the parental presumptions," she continued.

Lesbian lawyer Barbara Findlay applauds last month's appeal-court decision to uphold the 2011 ruling. "I am pleased that the courts in Alberta are recognizing the rights of families created by lesbians and gay men, even when the legislation doesn't make provision for them," Findlay says from her office in Vancouver.

British Columbia's parental laws are more inclusive toward gay couples than other jurisdictions in the country, adds Findlay (who prefers her name spelled in lower case). "In BC we have a brand new law, the Family Law Act, which came into effect in March 2013 and which spells out that a child can have several parents, as long as they make an agreement before the child is conceived. So we are, in some ways, ahead of the curve in relation to other provinces in Canada," she says.

Under BC's new law, sperm or egg donors will have no legal liability or responsibility, unless all parties specifically declare otherwise in a written contract. Surrogate mothers will also be able to sign a legal contract giving away their rights or responsibilities, before the child is born.

"It creates the possibility, for the first time in BC, of a multiparent family of up to as many as five people. Normally, the family law has only ever recognized two parents for a child upon birth, but in this act it could have as many as five," said Vancouver family law lawyer Dennis Dahl.

**August 23** - Over 100 Canadian civil society groups have joined forces calling for concrete action in response to Russia's anti-gay agenda at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. The groups signing an open letter to the Canadian Government, International Olympic Committee (IOC), International Paralympic Committee (IPC), Canada's Olympic and Paralympic committees, the games' Canadian broadcast partners, and the Sochi Games corporate sponsors include virtually every national and provincial AIDS organization in Canada, disability groups, education groups, unions, human rights groups, women's groups and churches.

Standouts include the United Church of Canada, the University of Ottawa, United Steelworkers, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, PFLAG Canada, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Canadian Federation for Sexual Health.

The groups have demanded that the parties the letter is directed to take a number of concrete steps to ensure the safety of LGBTs during the games and to add pressure on Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Russian parliament to repeal the ban on so-called 'gay-propaganda' and to stem the tide of violence being directed at Russia's LGBT community.

## Gay Marriage News

**September 7** - Film director and producer Kimjo Gwang-soo, 48, and 29-year-old Kim Seung-hwan, the head of gay film distributor Rainbow Factory, have married on a temporary stage built in central Seoul, **Korea**. More than 1,000 guests and citizens attended the staged ceremony. Korea does not however legally recognize same-sex marriages.

**September 30** - Two same-sex couples have become the first to be legally married in **Colombia**. Colombian attorney and LGBT advocate Germán Humerto Rincón Perfetti announced that a civil court judge had declared Julio Alberto Cantor Borbón and William Alberto Castro Franco "united in civil matrimony". In the same week the nation's leading newspaper also publishes a front-page article announcing the legal marriage of Elizabeth Castillo and Claudia Zea, who were also granted a marriage license by a different civil court judge.

Colombia joins a handful of other Latin American nations that embrace marriage equality, including **Argentina**, **Uruguay**, and many regions in **Brazil**. Some states in **Mexico**, including the nation's capital, **Mexico City**, also perform same-sex marriages.

**October 19 - France's** highest court has ruled that the country's mayors cannot refuse to officiate at same-sex marriages, rejecting a bid by a group of mayors who claimed gay marriage went against their moral or religious beliefs.

The Constitutional Council's ruling followed an appeal by mayors and registrars opposed to France's controversial bill legalizing same-sex marriages, which came into effect in May this year. They argued that the same-sex marriage bill should have included a "freedom of conscience" clause, giving officiators the right not to carry out same-sex marriages if it conflicts with their personal religious or moral beliefs. The lack of such a clause in the bill goes against the French constitution, they claim.

But the Council, France's highest legal authority, rejected this argument. The group of mayors say they will now take their case to the European Court of Human Rights.

**October 21** - A judge ruled in September that **New Jersey** had to recognize same-sex marriages starting October 21. The administration of Governor Chris Christie appealed and asked for a delay in the implementation date. The state Supreme Court has now said that it would not delay the start of the nuptials. The marriages began on the 21st, and hours later, a Christie spokesman said the appeal would be dropped. The state is the 14th in America to recognize same-sex marriage.

**October 22** - Gay and lesbian couples will be able to marry in the **Australian Capital Territory** after a bill to legalise same-sex marriage passed the territory's legislative assembly. People in the public gallery clapped and sang Love Is In The Air when the bill passed. The first marriages are likely to take place from December.

**October 27** - Hundreds of people gathered in the center of **Hanoi, Vietnam** to watch a staged wedding ceremony between two same-sex couples. Under the heat of an autumn morning, two same-sex couples dressed as brides and grooms took part in wedding ceremonies in front of around 300 people waving rainbow flags and holding colored balloons.

The festival is being held ahead of a planned debate on revisions to the Marriage and Family Law at the National Assembly on November 5th. The draft does not include the legalization of same-sex marriage, but removes the article banning them in the current law and includes provisions for same-sex couples who live together.

**November 5** - The **Illinois** General Assembly has passed a bill legalizing same sex marriage, putting the Land of Lincoln on course to be the 16th state to legalize same sex marriage. The House of Representatives narrowly passed the bill 61-54 and the state senate concurred a little more than an hour later voting 32-29 in favour of SB10. Governor Pat Quinn has previously said he would sign the bill into law.

Fourteen states plus **Washington D.C.**, allow same-sex marriage. Most recently, **New Jersey**, **Minnesota** and **Rhode Island** have allowed it. Although Illinois once appeared poised to become the first midwestern state to approve gay marriage in the Legislature, Minnesota did it sooner and started holding its first same-sex weddings over the summer. **Iowa** allows gay marriages too because of a court ruling, not a legislative vote.

**November 14** - A bill to legalise same-sex marriage in the **Australian state of New South Wales** has failed in a narrow vote of 19 to 21. Members of the State Legislative Council voted against allowing New South Wales to become the second Australian state to legalise marriage rights for same-sex couples.

**November 15 - Hawaii** has become the 15th state to legalize same-sex marriage as Governor Neil Abercrombie signed a bill into law that will allow gay weddings as soon as December 2.

## International News

**September 20 (Aljazeera)** Pope Francis has said the Catholic Church must shake off an obsession with teachings on abortion, contraception and homosexuality and become more merciful or risk the collapse of its entire moral edifice "like a house of cards". Signalling a dramatic shift in **Vatican** tone, Francis said in an interview with an Italian Jesuit journal, that the church had "locked itself up in small things, in small-minded rules" and should not be so prone to condemn.

In a remarkable change from his predecessor Benedict, who said homosexuality was an intrinsic disorder, Francis said that when homosexuals told him they were always condemned by the church and felt "socially wounded", he told them "the church does not want to do this". He re-stated his comments first made on a plane returning from a visit to Brazil in July that he was not in a position to judge homosexuals who are of good will and in search of God.

**September 22 (The Advocate)** Members of an **Italian** political party staged a kiss-in protesting the strength of a proposal to update the national hate crimes law with language to protect LGBT people.

The measure would expand the 20-year-old law to heavily prosecute crimes based on homophobia or transphobia. However members of the M5S or MoVimento 5 Stelle, staged a same-sex kiss-in, while other members held up signs urging "more rights." Members of that party do not believe the proposal goes far enough in restricting homophobia. An antihomophobia bill stalled right before the summer recess, but during that time, a 14-year-old boy committed suicide, claiming he was the victim of antigay bullying. His death prompted lower house speaker Laura Boldrini to ensure a measure was voted on this year.

The bill passed in the lower house Thursday, 354-79, but it is not expected to easily pass the Senate, where members of President Silvio Berlusconi's People of Freedom party have already promised that the bill would fall because it restricts freedom of speech.

**September 26 (The Advocate)** **Italian** pasta-maker Barilla apparently has a distaste for gay families. The company's chairman told Italian radio show *La Zanzara* that the world's largest pasta producer would never feature gay couples in its advertisements. "I would never do [a commercial] with a homosexual couple, not for lack of respect but because we don't agree with them," said Guido Barilla, according to a Reuters translation. "Ours is a classic family where the woman plays a fundamental role. ... If [gays] don't like it, they can go eat another brand."

Just to drive his point home, Barilla added, "I have no respect for adoption by gay families because this concerns a person who is not able to choose. Everyone has a the right to do what they want without disturbing those around them."

The backlash to Barilla's comments was almost immediate, with LGBT activists in Italy and around the world calling for a boycott of Barilla products. By midday in Italy, the hashtag **#boicottbarilla** was trending on Twitter.

**September 27 (Impact News)** An unprecedented meeting of government ministers called for urgent action to end the scourge of violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. The meeting of officials from close to a dozen countries was the first in which so many have come together to discuss LGBT rights issues at the **United Nations**.

"Today's meeting of ministers from around the globe shows a landmark commitment to end persecution based on sexual orientation and gender identity," said Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights

Watch. "The challenge now for both the United Nations and the individual countries will be to turn that commitment into action."

The meeting included foreign ministers from Argentina, the Netherlands and Norway, the secretary of state of the United States, the minister of development cooperation of France, high-level representatives from Brazil, Croatia, the European Union, Japan, and New Zealand, and the UN high commissioner for human rights. Canadian officials were absent.

**September 28 (UK Telegraph)** A six-year-old girl named Luana, or "Lulu" for short, may be the youngest person ever in **Argentina** to legally change her gender from that which she was assigned at birth. Argentina enacted its new gender identity law in May 2012, which permits individuals to determine their own sex and gender, and be identified appropriately on their national identity card, the DNI, as well as their birth certificate.

Lulu's mother, Gabriela, petitioned Buenos Aires Mayor Daniel Scioli and Argentine president Cristina Kirchner to allow her daughter to be legally recognized as female, though she was assigned male at birth. Gabriela told the public officials that her daughter has identified as female since she first began to speak.

Gabriela first filed the request for her daughter's legal gender change last December, but was denied because of her daughter's young age. But Argentina's secretary of children, youth, and family subsequently overturned that decision, citing international human rights doctrine that determined a person under 14 can legally consent to such a change. Following that decision, Mayor Scioli approved Lulu's application to change her name on her DNI and birth certificate, reports the *Telegraph*.

Argentinian reports claim Lulu's case is the first in the world where a transgender child has been able to change their legal gender through an administrative process, without turning to the judicial system.

**October 8 (The Advocate)** The Persian Gulf kingdom of **Kuwait** is planning to identify LGBT people through "medical screening tests" and bar them from setting foot inside the country and its neighbours, reports the *International Business Times*. According to the Kuwaiti health ministry's director of public health, Yousouf Mindkar, routine clinical screenings of those entering the Gulf Cooperation Council countries will soon include tests to detect LGBT people and keep them from entering.

"Health centers conduct the routine medical check to assess the health of the expatriates when they come into the GCC countries," Mindkar told local newspaper *Al Rai*. "However, we will take stricter measures that will help us detect gays who will be then barred from entering Kuwait or any of the GCC member states."

Homosexual acts are currently illegal in all GCC member states including Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, with those found guilty facing a possible jail sentence of up to 10 years if they are under 21. The GCC is a political and economic alliance encompassing those countries plus the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Oman.

The announcement of these tests has triggered outrage, with LGBT groups now calling for a boycott of the soccer World Cup tournament currently planned to take place in Qatar in 2022.

**October 18 (Pink News)** The first gay couple to adopt a child in **France** has done so five months after a law was passed to allow equal marriage. The couple was identified by *Le Monde* as Caroline and Pascale A, and was married back in June. They have now received approval for one of the wives to adopt the children of the other, who are Laure and Lise. According to the report, both of the children are the result of artificial insemination by an unknown donor, or donors.

The *Association of Gay and Lesbian Parents and Future Parents* celebrated the announcement, and said that it may be heard in the hallways of schools in France: "Two mums or two dads, it's possible!"

**October 21 (Huffington Post)** A proposed bill that would further solidify **Russia's** crackdown on its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) citizens has been recalled for revision - though not entirely removed from consideration by lawmakers. The proposed bill would reportedly strip the ability of LGBT parents to retain custody of their children by making the "fact of non-traditional sexual orientation" a basis for denying custody. Now, however, a spokesperson for Alexei Zhuravlyov (the far right MP who made the initial proposal) says the bill has been withdrawn, but plans are in place to resubmit it after some revisions are made.

If the proposed bill is signed into law, it would equate homosexuality with child abuse and drug addiction in terms of parental rights to custody over their children. "Not surprisingly, some gay and lesbian families are already beginning to plan their escapes from Russia," U.S. actor and producer Harvey Fierstein wrote in the *New York Times* in July. Russian president Vladimir Putin added to the country's antigay laws by signing another law that bars gay people in other countries from adopting Russian children.

A Russian group's video making the rounds on the Internet uses bad science and homophobic lies against LGBT people, saying, for instance, that they adopt children so they can abuse the children sexually. The Russian-language, English-subtitled video, from a group called Healthy Young Generation–Healthy Russia, makes the unfounded claims that "one in three children being raised by same-sex couples were needed by their adopted parents for sex" and that "50% of pedophiles are gay." It also asserts that, "gay people die 20-30 years before normal people" and that sexual orientation can be changed readily, "treated more easily than alcoholism."

The parenting bill proposal first garnered international attention in the wake of the country's anti-gay "propaganda" law. This law bans any talk about homosexuality in front of minors. Members of Russia's LGBT community say the existing anti-gay laws are already having an impact. "They are inciting enmity between people, it's a genuine witch hunt," Sasha, a lesbian living in Russia with her partner and their three-year-old son, told *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. "They are setting people against each other like dogs."

Many have speculated that the "propaganda" law will be used to arrest athletes and attendees at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. Empowered by this legislation, Russian vigilantes contributed to the formation of a pervasive climate of fear and violence for LGBT citizens, resulting in both alleged public acts of violence and private acts of torture.

**November 1 (Pink News)** The world's largest sporting apparel company **Nike**, pledged to donate all proceeds from a special line of gear towards LGBT equality in sports, and has now donated \$200,000 to an LGBT sporting charity. Nike launched the #BeTrue range earlier this year, which came to fruition in October as the sports apparel giant donated the \$200,000 to the LGBT Sports Coalition.

The coalition hopes to end homophobia in sports by 2016. According to Campus Pride, one of the groups affiliated with the coalition, said the donation was the largest Nike's employee network has ever made to an LGBT cause, and the first ever made to the coalition. "Today we need more corporations to speak up and take a stand against anti-LGBT bias and bullying in sports," said Shane Windmeyer, executive director of Campus Pride. And I think that's a key point that Nike's partnership here is going to drive home.

An openly-gay basketball star in the US, who came out in March in an interview, has signed an endorsement deal with sports giant Nike, debunking the idea that she would have been throwing away endorsement opportunities by coming out. US basketball star Brittney Griner came out as gay, and offered advice for young women looking up to her to "just be who you are", and not worry about what other people might be thinking.

**November 1 (Aljazeera)** **Germany** has become Europe's first country to introduce a third gender by allowing babies born with characteristics of both sexes to be registered as neither male nor female. The new law gives parents an option of leaving gender section blank on birth certificate, creating a category in

public register for indeterminate sex. The move is aimed at preventing parents from making a hasty decision about controversial sex assignment surgeries for newborns, but critics say the law does not go far enough.

Lucie Veith, an intersex person from Hamburg told *AFP news agency* that the cosmetic genital surgeries for newborns must be forbidden altogether. Veith said leaving the gender undefined on birth certificates was never the main lobbying point for her group, the German chapter of the Association of Intersexed People, or others in the intersex community. Operations on intersex babies and infants take place in many European countries without informed consent by the patients, according to a 2012 European Commission report on the topic.

The Council of Europe addressed the issue for the first time last month in a Parliamentary Assembly resolution, calling on member states to study the prevalence of "non-medically justified operations" that may harm children and take steps to "ensure that no-one is subjected to unnecessary medical or surgical treatment that is cosmetic rather than vital for health during infancy or childhood".

The report also found that many adults born intersex are angry these surgeries were performed without their consent. Experts estimate one in 1,500 to 2,000 births result in a baby of indeterminate gender or both male and female gender features.

**November 14 (AP)** A prosecutor in **Senegal** says five women have been charged under the country's anti-gay law that imposes prison sentences of up to five years for homosexual acts. The women were arrested during a birthday party at a restaurant in Dakar's Yoff district.

Senegalese President Macky Sall has said the country is "not ready" to decriminalize homosexual acts. The women's rights group Women's Smile says the latest arrests highlight a hostile environment for lesbians, who it says are being targeted more frequently by police.

The suspects include an assistant director of Women's Smile, the only group in Senegal to advocate for lesbians' rights.

## **News from the LGBT Family Coalition**

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

#### **DECEMBER 2013**

**◆ SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8TH FROM 2 – 5 P.M.**

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

**THE LGBT Family Coalition and Gender Creative Kids invite you to our annual holiday party! There will be a show with Filamboule the court jester (clown, juggler and magician), music by D.J. Évelyne, activities and crafts for kids and adults alike, and, of course, a visit from Santa.** 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 to 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.**

◆ **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH**  
**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! Details to follow...

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

**For more information, please contact Marie-Christine at (418) 523-5572 or by e-mail: demystification@grisquebec.org**

**January 2014:**

◆ **SATURDAY, JANUARY 18TH AT 10:00 A.M.**  
**QUEBEC CITY : FAMILY SLEDDING AND FONDUE AT MONT TOURBILLON**  
**PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FLIER FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS.**

◆ **TUESDAY, JANUARY 21ST AT 7:00 P.M.**  
**QUEBEC CITY: COURSE FOR FUTURE PARENTS – PART 1: HOW TO FORM A FAMILY / LEGAL QUESTIONS**  
**PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FLIER FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS. **ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.****

**Location: Université Laval**

◆ **THURSDAY, JANUARY 30TH AT 7:00 P.M.**  
**MONTREAL: CONFERENCE “POUR PARENTS DÉBORDÉS ET EN MANQUE D’ENERGIE”**  
**PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FLIER FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS.**

**Location: Centre St-Pierre, 1212, rue Panet, Montréal, room 204.**

◆ **WEEKEND DAY (depending on the weather)**  
**MONTREAL: FAMILY SLEDDING ACTIVITY**  
**Location: Pelican Park (Corner Molson and St-Joseph streets)**  
**Details to follow...**

**FEBRUARY 2014:**

◆ **SATURDAY FEBRUARY 8TH AT 8 P.M.**  
**MID-WINTER PARTY FOR OLD AND NEW MEMBERS AT BAR LE COCKTAIL**

**Adults only:** A chance for old and new members of the group to get to know each other. We will meet at the Bar Le Cocktail!

**(For more information please see enclosed flier).**

◆ **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH AT 7:00 P.M.**  
**CONFERENCE ON FERTILITY CLINICS**  
**PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FLIER FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS.**

**Location: Maison Parent Roback, 110 Ste Therese, Montreal, QC H2Y 1E6**

◆ **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH AT 7:00 P.M.**  
**QUEBEC CITY: COURSE FOR FUTURE PARENTS – PART 2: ADOPTING CHILDREN**  
**PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FLIER FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS. **ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.****

**Location: Université Laval**

◆ **SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22ND AND SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23RD**  
**INTENSIVE WEEKEND IN MONTREAL FOR FUTURE LGBT PARENTS (IN FRENCH)**

**PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED FLIER FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS. **ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.****

**Location: Maison Parent Roback, 110 Ste Therese, Montreal, QC H2Y 1E6**

◆ **A SATURDAY IN FEBRUARY**  
**GET-TOGETHER FOR YOUNG PARENTS**

**Details to follow...**

**Location: Maison Parent Roback, 110 Ste Therese, Montreal, QC H2Y 1E6**

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**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](mailto:margelleboisfrancis@hotmail.com)

[www.lamargelle.spaces.live.com](http://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.dorsheimet.com](http://www.dorsheimet.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](http://www.cdfrdp.qc.ca) ainsi que le site de notre regroupement : [www.rcentres.qc.ca/propos.html](http://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](mailto: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](http://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.

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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](mailto:info@familleshomoparentales.org) or by post to CFH, 110, rue Ste-Thérèse, bureau 405, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1E6. 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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♦ 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](mailto:marieandreeboivin@yahoo.ca)