



Coalition des familles homoparentales

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TWO MOTHERS, A DONOR AND THE KIDS

By Isabel Côté, professor, school of social work, Université du Québec en Outaouais

The contemporary family is increasingly varied, while the traditional heteronormative family – mom, dad and kids living under the same roof – is no longer the dominant model in western countries. This diversification of family models applies equally to homoparental families. In the context of my doctoral research I became interested in lesboparental families in which the children were conceived with the help of a known donor¹. I was hoping to understand the motivations of these lesbian mothers to start their families with a known donor, as well as the motivations of the donors themselves. I also wanted to look at the role that these donors did or didn't play in the lives of the children. The following is an overview of the results of this exploratory study.

Motivations expressed by the mothers

Mothers evoked three main reasons to explain their choice of having had a child with the help of a known donor. The question of origins was a theme that recurred for the majority. For these mothers the donor was part of the child's history, even if he wasn't a part of the family. In addition, the fact of having a known donor allowed the child the possibility of eventually forming a relationship with the donor, if both child and donor agreed. Some mothers also hoped that their child would have an involved father in their lives, even if the donor's paternity was not legally recognized. Finally, others wanted to use the donor to establish biological links between all members of the family, whether by using the same donor for all children (when pregnancies were carried by both women in a couple) or by choosing a donor that was biologically related to the mother that didn't carry the child.

Motivations expressed by the donors

The motivations that donors expressed to justify their participation in the mothers' parental project were varied. Donors that were regularly involved in the children's lives were those that had expressed a desire to be a father since childhood. Others mentioned the desire to preserve the genetic line as an important motivational factor. Some wished to have the opportunity to play an important and significant role in a child's life. Even if they chose not to have regular contact with the child, many felt that becoming a donor was a significant personal experience.

Presence and involvement of donors with the children

Many of the men encountered in my study had regular contact with the children, especially those who were socially recognized as the children's fathers. These men saw the children frequently. For example, some of them occasionally babysat the children to offer the mothers a break, whereas others saw the children more often during social activities organised by the couple. Activities carried out with the kids were more often focused on playing rather than the daily routine. Some donors were less involved with family life and only saw the children during social encounters with the mothers. One of the donors never saw the children that were the result of his donation, unless by accident.

¹ Côté, Isabel (2012). *Deux mères, un donneur et des enfants. Une reconfiguration des rôles familiaux?* Thèse de doctorat en service social. Université de Montréal [en ligne] papyrus.bib.umontreal.ca/jspui/handle/1866/8449

Some mothers highly valued the contact between the donor and their children. This was the case for those whose children recognized the donor as their father. Some mothers said that they expected the donor to be proactive in maintaining a relationship with the children. They described the time that their children spent with the donor as being highly valued. However others preferred to preserve a certain distance between the children and their donor, preferring to wait for when the children were old enough to express interest in meeting up with the donor.

Dialogue between the mothers and their donors: their respective roles and expectations

From the outset, both mothers and donors determined the structure of their family and delineated the role that the donors would play in the children’s lives. They discussed their respective expectations and their vision of the donors’ involvement, the role they would play in the children’s lives and the words used to designate their roles. It was also at the beginning that some couples asked the donors if they would act as donors for more than one child, which they all accepted. This clarification of expected roles, of needs and of intentions resulted in determining together what role the donors would play in the future children’s lives. This dialogue perhaps explains that none of the families reported any conflict or divergence of opinions in terms of the donors’ involvement.

The women encountered insisted on the importance of the quality of their relationship with the donors that facilitated discussion about sensitive topics. They describe the donors as being trustworthy, authentic, open and easy to speak with, even about highly charged emotional topics. As for the donors, they saw the women that received their donation as good mothers and emphasized that in the beginning their sole desire was to help their friends, without having any vested interests or expectations, so that they could realize their dream to form a family. Overall, the women and men encountered felt that flexibility and confidence in each other was necessary to make the family dynamic successful.

Interested in writing for our newsletter? Send your articles at any time to info@familleshomoparentales.org or by post to CFH, 110, rue Sainte-Thérèse, bureau 405, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1E6

News Briefs: March - May 2013

Québec News

March 8, 2013 - Québec’s Minister of Justice, Bertrand St-Arnaud has launched a campaign against homophobia, including television and radio ads attempting to help people become more open and accepting towards same-sex couples.

The campaign features commercials that aim to raise awareness of how comfortable viewers are with living with, working with and being supportive of LGBT people. It consists of two television advertisements in French, and one radio spot in English. They all encourage viewers or listeners to ask themselves whether they are really open to sexual diversity. Both TV ads end with same-sex couples sharing a kiss, which is followed by the question: “Does this change the way you thought twenty seconds ago?”

As well as the ads, the campaign includes an interactive website (<http://fighthomophobia.gouv.qc.ca/>) which allows users to investigate different situations, and challenges the way the user looks at them. It contains resources for fighting homophobia, and information about different types of homophobia.

A recent poll of 800 Quebecers run by *Global News* found that 90% had no issue with homosexuality, however 40% did say they felt uncomfortable with same-sex couples engaging in public displays of affection.

A second phase of the campaign will be launched next year. It'll be expanded to include other issues regarding homophobia including families with LGBT parents.

March 28, 2013 – Québec's Justice Minister, Bertrand St-Arnaud, has announced a budget of \$166,825 for eleven LGBT organizations to carry out projects that benefit sexual minorities, especially youth, the elderly, aboriginal and transsexual people.

Amongst the chosen projects "A conference on GLBT realities" organized by *GLBT Québec* (\$8 875), *Action AGIR* for immigrants and refugees (\$12 000), the "Le Soleil est au Zénith" project of the group *Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique* on the vulnerability and visibility of LGBT people of afro-Antillean origins (\$12 000), and the project «TransSolidaire against violence» (\$20 000) from *Cactus Montréal*.

The LGBT Family Coalition has received \$20 000 for the project "Strategies to end homophobia: training future teachers" in which we will promote our training sessions within the 12 faculties of Education across Québec.

On the heels of this good news, on **April 2nd**, another announcement from the ministry of Justice, this time about complementary infrastructure funding for LGBT organizations that are already being funded by the ministries of Employment and Social Solidarity and Health and Social Services. A total of \$430 000 was awarded to: le *Conseil québécois des LGBT*, la *Coalition des familles homoparentales (LGBT Family Coalition)*, la *Fondation Émergence*, le *Réseau des lesbiennes du Québec*, *Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique*, *GLBT Québec*, *AlterHéros*, *M.A.I.N.S Bas St-Laurent*, *Toxico-Actions*, *Service intervention Proximité Domaine du Roy*, le *Gris Québec*, le *Gris Mauricie/Centre du Québec*, *Aide au transsexuels et transsexuelles du Qc*, *Centre communautaire des gais et lesbiennes de Montréal*, *Projet 10*, *Jeunesse Lambda*, *Gris Montréal*, *Coalition d'aide aux lesbiennes, gais et bisexuels*, *Gris Chaudière-Appalaches*, *Le Néó*, *Divers-Gens* and *Jeunes Adultes Gai-e-s*.

The funding received for both infrastructure and specific projects is in line with the Québec government's action plan against homophobia (2011-2016), which contains specific recommendations regarding the financial support of LGBT groups whose mandate it is to fight against homophobia and transphobia.

To find out more about Quebec's action plan against homophobia (2011-2016) you can consult: www.justice.gouv.qc.ca.

May 2, 2013 - Québécois filmmaker Xavier Dolan (*J'ai tué ma mère*, *Les amours imaginaires* and *Laurence Anyways*) has come out with a music video that sends a powerful message about bullying and violence. His clip for French rock band Indochine's latest song, *College Boy*, is a powerful piece of work that's already generated an enormous amount of controversy in France.

Montreal actor Antoine Pilon plays a high-school kid who's bullied by his classmates, is beat-up, is urinated on by other kids, and is then quite literally crucified by his schoolmates. They nail him to the cross and then start shooting at him. When the police arrive, they too start shooting at the teenager on the cross.

Meanwhile the other kids are filming all this on their smart-phones and wearing blindfolds.

'Disturbing' doesn't even come close to describing the impact of the clip. Obviously Dolan and Indochine are using these heavy images to make a strong statement about bullying and they seem to be more specifically making a point about homophobic bullying.

The clip has already been censored in France and by MusiquePlus in Quebec.

"It seems absurd to me that the clip is censored," said Dolan. "Is it really more violent than all the movies that arrive on our screens every day? The question shouldn't be – did I go too far? It should be – what's stopping a group of teenagers from going this far...?"

May 13, 2013 – The *Fondation Émergence* has awarded the Fight Against Homophobia Prize to Québec singer-songwriter, Ariane Moffatt.

For Laurent McCutcheon, ex-president and board member of the *Fondation Émergence*, “Ariane Moffatt is a model for young gays and lesbians who might want to form a family”.

In February, Ariane Moffatt announced that her partner Florence was carrying twins, conceived through assisted procreation. They will become parents in July.

May 14, 2013 - Québec’s health minister, Réjean Hébert, is asking questions about “The pertinence of offering certain services related to assisted procreation”. He has asked commissaire Robert Salois to hold a public health consultation with a limited number of participants. The general public has also been invited to participate on-line on the commission’s web site until June 17th. If you are interested in submitting a testimony about your experience with assisted procreation, please consult:

<http://www.csbe.gouv.qc.ca/index.php?id=120>

The consultation will look at issues relating to the “clinical, scientific, ethical, social, judicial, organizational and economic” aspects of assisted procreation. Although the mandate is principally to look at ethical issues surrounding assisted procreation, the gratuity of the program may come into question. The LGBT Family Coalition has submitted two briefs in the context of this consultation.

Canada News

March 1, 2013 - The RCMP has announced that it will lay charges against Leia Picard, the owner of Canadian Fertility Consultants. Picard is accused of violating the Assisted Human Reproduction Act for arranging surrogate mothers for would-be parents.

The action against Picard marks the first time criminal charges have been laid using the Assisted Human Reproduction Act since its adoption in 2004. The charges against Picard suggest that the federal government is going to start enforcing the act — particularly its provisions around paying surrogate mothers and arranging payment.

More than 15 years in the making, the Assisted Human Reproduction Act was passed to set boundaries on the use of assisted reproductive technologies like artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization. Among the act’s most contentious provisions are bans on payment for egg donation, sperm donation, and surrogacy, as well as bans on arranging such payment. The penalties? Up to 10 years in jail and/or a \$500,000 fine.

Picard intends to fight the charges “not only to protect her reputation and business but also to ensure that the law governing the assisted-reproduction industry is clear and fair”.

March 7, 2013 - *Scouts Canada* has reaffirmed its inclusive policy for gay members, volunteers and staff, and invited singer Carly Rae Jepsen to perform at its jamboree, since she turned down the Boy Scouts of America’s gig for its anti-gay policy.

The national Boy Scouts of America (BSA) has a national ban on allowing gay volunteers, members and staff that it is currently considering revising. The co-ed Scouts Canada, however, which is totally separate from the BSA, notes that it “does not discriminate for reasons of gender, culture, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.”

March 18, 2013 - A Canadian teenager has defended an anti-bullying bill which would protect his right to start a gay-straight alliance, in the face of harsh opposition from religious groups who say the bill is an “incremental attempt to destroy” them.

Evan Wiens, 16, says he is the only openly gay student in his school, and has faced homophobic bullying to the point where he was afraid to walk through the school corridors. He is a supporter of Bill 18, which would require all schools in Manitoba to allow students to form gay-straight alliances, as well as clubs promoting equality between students of different genders, races, and abilities.

There have already been objections to the bill from religious groups. A meeting to oppose the bill in Steinbach, a town with a high Christian population, drew a crowd of 1,200 people out of its 13,500 residents.

Wiens, a resident of Steinbach and a student at Steinbach Regional Secondary, is trying to start a gay-straight alliance to support other LGBT students at the school who may have fears about coming out.

The bill is expected to become law this summer, but will be subject to public hearings first. Although conservative MLAs in Manitoba are against the proposed legislation, some of Manitoba's largest school divisions are showing their support for Bill 18.

March 21, 2013 - A bill criminalizing discrimination against transgender people has passed in Canada's House of Commons, having gained crucial support from a small number of Conservative MPs.

The Commons voted 149-137 to pass the bill, which would classify violence against trans people as a hate crime. 16 of the votes in favour came from the Conservative party, but the majority of Conservatives voted against the bill, including Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

New Democrat Party member Randall Garrison, who sponsored the bill, said after it passed: "Today New Democrats are proud to have contributed to ensuring equal protection under the law from discrimination and hatred based on gender identity. Transgender and transsexual citizens are among the most marginalized and are too often victims of harassment and acts of violence."

The bill will now go to a Senate vote, which it is expected to pass.

Gay Marriage News

February 26 - A top minister in **Bermuda** says the government has ruled out allowing same-sex marriage. Earlier, equal rights campaigners were given a glimmer of hope when the Bermuda Government proposed an amendment to the countries' Human Rights Act by adding sexual orientation to a list of prohibited categories of discrimination. However, the government confirms that the changes to the Human Rights Act will not happen and that same-sex marriage is not on the agenda.

March 1 - Deputies in Warsaw reject three bills which could have begun the process of allowing civil partnerships for gay couples in **Poland**. The proposed legislation by the ruling Civic Platform Party is rejected by some of its own members, causing a split within the party.

March 1 - The **Finnish** parliament's Legal Affairs Committee votes narrowly to reject a bill to legalize equal marriage. The bill, proposed by the National Coalition Party (NCP) would have made marriage gender-neutral, therefore allowing same-sex couples to marry. It was rejected 9 votes to 8, and so it will not go before the full legislature for consideration. Advocates of equal marriage will now turn to gathering signatures from Finnish citizens, in order to for Parliament to consider equal marriage laws.

March 13 - Scores of corporations file a **US** Supreme Court brief favoring gay marriage broadly arguing that laws banning same-sex marriages, like California's ballot initiative Proposition 8, are unconstitutional under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses. Signatories include Apple, Facebook, Intel, Morgan Stanley, Facebook, eBay, Cisco, Levi Strauss, McGraw Hill, NCR, Nike, Office Depot, Oracle, Panasonic, Xerox. Verizon and Cablevision.

March 16 - President Obama's administration is granted the opportunity to argue to the **US** Supreme Court that California's Prop 8 ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional. The Obama administration is also participating in litigation against the Defense of Marriage Act.

March 19 - A survey conducted in **America** reveals that support for same-sex marriage has grown to be a "mirror image" of ten years ago, with the majority now in favour of legalization and many calling for a nationwide law. The poll, conducted by the *Washington Post* and *ABC News*, finds that 58% of Americans now support the legalization of same-sex marriage, while 36% oppose it.

March 24 - Hundreds of thousands of marchers take to the streets of **Paris** to protest against the likely legalization of same-sex marriage, with scuffles breaking out after crowds try to take an unauthorized route on the Champs Elysees.

The march is organized by French anti-marriage equality group *Manif Pour Tous*, who also arrange a simultaneous protest in Trafalgar Square. The **London** event attracts an estimated 2000 protesters and counter-protesters, dwarfed by police estimates of 300,000 protesters at the Paris march. *Manif Pour Tous* says that the figure was even higher, claiming 1.2 million present.

March 26 - The **US** Supreme Court hears historic arguments on Proposition 8, the California constitutional amendment which in 2008 ruled that only heterosexual marriages were recognized in the state. There is a wide spectrum of possible rulings the Court could make: it may decide to uphold Proposition 8, allowing the state ban and others like it to stand; it may make a narrow ruling that only the California ban should be struck down, leaving other states to make their own decisions; or it may decide to rule all state bans on same-sex marriage unlawful.

A decision by the Supreme Court is expected by the end of June.

April 4 - The **French** Senate begins to debate the country's proposed same-sex marriage bill. Opinion polls suggest a majority of French people still support equal marriage but their numbers have fallen in recent weeks – possibly in light of the contentious nature of the debate by the opponents.

April 12 - The **French** Senate gives its approval to a bill that would allow same-sex couples the right to marry and adopt. Meanwhile, several French lobby groups have complained the bill does not go far enough because it doesn't legalize medically assisted procreation for same-sex couples.

April 17 - As the Parliament of **New Zealand** passes a bill to allow equal marriage in the country, those in attendance of the reading break into song (a century-old Maori love song), once it is announced that the bill has passed.

April 18 - **France's** Interior Ministry says four people have been detained on suspicion of carrying out an attack at a gay bar in Lille. France's decision to press ahead with equal marriage has been met with a rise in homophobic and transphobic incidents in the past year.

April 18 - **Vietnam's** Health Ministry has recommended that same-sex marriage should be legalized, citing research which shows the stigmatization faced by LGBT people can have serious health repercussions. The Vietnamese government began considering recognition for same-sex couples in July last year, and on 16 April held a review on the Law on Marriage and Family, which currently prohibits marriage between same-sex couples.

April 19 - The equal marriage debate in **France** has come to blows as French Parliamentarians engage in a heated debate around the issue. The lower house of the French National Assembly almost mirrors violent protests outside, around the issue of equal marriage, as MPs come to the end of the capped 25-hour debate around the bill which would allow equal marriage, and same sex couples the right to adopt.

Punches are reportedly thrown in the scuffle, which lasted several minutes, whilst ministers shout “out”, “out”. One minister says he had never experienced such an incident in his 30 years in the lower house.

April 21 - Tens of thousands of demonstrators wearing blue and pink march on **Paris** in opposition to equal marriage. The marchers, estimated at 50,000, walked through Montparnasse, while thousands of counter-protesters show their support for marriage equality legislation at a smaller gathering in Bastille Square.

April 22 - A gay man in **Nice, France** is beaten unconscious in the latest apparent homophobic attack in France. A gay librarian, was beaten in Paris earlier in the month. LGBT campaigners say the pending arrival of France’s same-sex marriage bill has been used by some as an excuse to carry out anti-gay violence.

April 23 - **France’s** National Assembly votes to legalize same-sex marriage, after months of debate and heated protests. The ruling Socialist party and their allies in the lower house of the National Assembly pass the bill 331 in favour - 225 against, giving same-sex couples the legal right to marry.

Campaigners celebrate the news that France has become the 14th nation in the world to legalize marriage rights for same-sex couples and Justice Minister Christiane Taubira says the first weddings could be held as soon as June. The legislation, which also provides adoption rights for same-sex couples, is expected to be approved by the Constitutional Council and signed into law by President Francois Hollande, who made it a manifesto pledge.

“It is a generous text that you’ve voted for today,” Justice Minister Christiane Taubira tells legislators on, calling the law a “very beautiful reform.”

April 24 - Anti-equal marriage protesters face up to riot police in the centre of **Paris**. Protests turn violent, as stones, bottles, and iron bars are used as weapons against riot police deployed to protect parliament. The police eventually use teargas against the violent protesters. Violent protests also take place in **Lyon**.

April 25 - The **Colombian** Senate rejects a bill which would have allowed same-sex couples the right to marry. The decision by the Senate directly defies a previous ruling by the Supreme Court that it must allow equal marriage rights to gay and lesbian couples.

May 3 - The **US state of Rhode Island** becomes the tenth state to allow equal marriage, as its Governor signs the bill into law, after it passes a second vote in the House by a very wide margin. Rhode Island has a large Catholic population, and the legislation stipulates that religious institutions can choose whether or not to allow same-sex ceremonies to take place, and that no religious leader would be obligated to officiate any ceremony.

May 3 - **Uruguay** becomes the 12th country in the world, and the second in South America, following Argentina, to legalize same-sex marriage. President Mujica signs legislation which gives couples the right to marry from August 1. In recent years, Uruguay has moved to allow same-sex civil unions, adoption by gay couples, and to allow openly gay members of the armed forces.

May 7 - Lawmakers in the **US state of Delaware** vote 12 to 9 in favour of a bill to legalize equal marriage, making the Diamond State the 11th to allow same-sex marriage.

May 14 - The **Brazilian** National Council of Justice clears the way for same-sex marriage across the country by ruling that gay couples can not be denied the right to marry. The council, headed by the chief justice of the Brazilian Supreme Court says that the civil authorities have no right to reject same-sex couples from applying for marriage licenses.

International News

February 19, 2013 (Pink News) Germany's highest court has ruled that one member of a civil partnership should be able to adopt their partner's stepchild or adopted child. Until now, same-sex couples could only adopt their partner's biological child. However, the ruling only means that same-sex couples can adopt the same child on an individual basis and not as a couple and they still cannot adopt unrelated children.

Same-sex civil partnerships have been legal in Germany since 2001. In August, German Chancellor Angela Merkel rejected calls to give to LGBT couples the tax breaks enjoyed by heterosexual married couples.

February 21, 2013 (Pink News) A demonstration against equal rights for gay people in **Puerto Rico** has seen hundreds of thousands of people turn up. According to leaders of the protests, between 200,000 and 268,000 Christian demonstrators turned up to San Juan's Capitol building to protest against equal rights for LGBT people. It was described as the largest such demonstration in the history of the US commonwealth.

The protesters claimed to be defending the idea of "traditional marriage" and more generally were demonstrating against extending certain civil rights to LGBT people. The demonstration came two days before the Supreme Court in Puerto Rico voted to uphold a law banning same-sex couples from adopting children. Finally the court voted 5-4 to keep the law which makes it illegal for gay and lesbian couples to adopt.

February 25, 2013 (Pink News) DC Comics' Batwoman has proposed to her girlfriend in the latest installment of the comic strip, amidst controversy surrounding the publisher's decision to hire a writer with anti-gay views to write for another title.

Kate Kane, also known as Batwoman, proposed to her girlfriend, Maggie Sawyer, in the latest episode of the comic.

DC Comics have been heavily criticized recently for its decision to hire anti-gay writer, Orson Scott Card, author of *Enders Game*, to write the first two installments of its new digital-first comic, *Adventures of Superman*. Some fans called for a boycott of the company, and of the comic. An AllOut petition calling for DC to dump Scott Card had received almost 16,000 signatures.

Last year, after it was revealed that a major character of DC Comics would come out as gay, lesbian or bisexual, one of the company's oldest characters, Green Lantern, was reintroduced as a gay man. Marvel's Northstar, the first openly gay hero, tied the knot with his boyfriend Kyle Jinadu in an issue of 'Astonishing X-Men'.

March 4, 2013 (BBC News) A **UK** study into children adopted by same-sex couples has found that those adopted by gay or lesbian parents are just as likely to thrive as those adopted by heterosexual couples. Researchers at **Cambridge University** carried out the study. The experiences of adoptive families, was explored, looking at important aspects of family relationships, parental wellbeing and child adjustment. The study compared 41 adoptive families headed by gay fathers, 40 headed by lesbian mothers and 49 headed by heterosexual parents.

Professor Susan Golombok, director of the Centre for Family Research and co-author of the report said: "Overall we found markedly more similarities than differences in experiences between family types. The differences that did emerge relate to levels of depressive symptoms in parents, which are especially low for gay fathers, and the contrasting pathways to adoption which was second choice for many of the heterosexual and some lesbian parents – but first choice for all but one of the gay parents."

The research showed gay fathers were significantly less likely to report having depressive symptoms than lesbian mothers and heterosexual couples, most probably reflecting the lower levels of depression shown by

men than women generally. However, it should be noted that the level of depression reported by lesbian mothers and heterosexual parents was below, or in line with, the national picture for mental health.

Most parents across the family types had received positive experiences of the adoption process with many speaking warmly of the support they received. A number of same-sex couples, however, reported that agencies lacked experience in working with gay and lesbian parents and that this showed itself in awkwardness.

March 14, 2013 (ILGA News) Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, **Argentina**, has been elected the **new pope** and will now be known as Pope Francis. Bergoglio is seen an unwaveringly orthodox on matters of sexual morality, staunchly opposing abortion, same-sex marriage, and contraception. In 2010 he asserted that gay adoption is a form of discrimination against children. In a letter to the monasteries of Buenos Aires about the gay adoption bill, Bergoglio wrote: "Let's not be naive, we're not talking about a simple political battle; it is a destructive pretension against the plan of God.

April 3, 2013 (AP) Mike Rice, the men's basketball coach at Rutgers University, has been fired. ESPN released a video of Rice hurling basketballs at the heads of players from close range, cursing at them, and shouting homophobic slurs in their direction. Rutgers, the state university of **New Jersey**, paid Rice \$650,000 this year.

What's remarkable here is that Rutgers athletic director Tim Perneti saw all of this footage back in November, and chose to suspend Rice for just three games, and fine him \$50,000.

April 12, 2013 (Egale News) The **National Hockey League** has become the first major professional team sport in the US to announce a formal partnership with *You Can Play*, an advocacy group aiming to reduce homophobia. The group *You Can Play* has already worked with the NHL on its public service messages, and hopes to send the message that players should be judged solely on their abilities, not on their sexual orientations.

The NHL and NHL Players Association came together in agreement for the partnership, which hopes to reduce casual homophobic language in locker rooms, and a more inclusive community, in all levels of hockey. The scheme will allow education and awareness for all players and will allow You Can Play to speak at a symposium with younger players. Teams and players will have personnel and resources provided upon request. The NHL's Behavioral Health Program will also be altered to include counseling, and confidential advice or information on sexual orientation where requested.

April 15, 2013 (Gay Star News) The Secretary-General of the **United Nations**, Ban Ki-moon, has promised to lead a global campaign for LGBT rights. And he has told governments around the world that they have a 'legal duty' to protect gay and trans people and that 'culture, tradition or religion' could not be used as an excuse for failing to do so.

His comments in a video message to the Oslo Conference on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity were not his first remarks on sexual orientation or gender identity – but were the strongest-worded. The head of the UN has previously called the criminalization of homosexuality 'an outrage' inherited from 'former colonial powers', saying the laws 'must go'.

April 26, 2013 (Fugues) Russian President Vladimir Putin, has confirmed reports that the country may change its agreements for the foreign adoption of Russian children, in the light of France legalizing equal marriage, to prevent gay, married couples from adopting.

"I consider it fully correct to make changes to the appropriate documents. It is a current issue and we need to think about it," said Putin in a meeting with lawmakers, going on to say foreign countries must respect Russia's "cultural traditions and ethical norms."

Children's rights commissioner Pavel Astakhov recently expressed concern about Russian children being adopted by same-sex couples. He said he would do all he could to avoid Russian orphans being adopted by gay couples.

Turkey also recently started a campaign to retrieve children adopted by people in European countries, who were given to gay and lesbian couples. The Turkish campaign is centered around nine-year-old Yunus, who was taken from his parents, who allegedly dropped him on the ground, and placed in the care of a lesbian couple, in the Netherlands. Referring to the case, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, described homosexuality as "a sexual preference," which goes against Islam.

Another law, the Dima Yakovlev, which came into force on January 1st 2013, banned the adoption of Russian children by US citizens. The Russian Foreign Ministry said it was concerned over the fate of an orphaned Russian boy adopted by an American woman in 2007, having learnt that the woman is a lesbian.

April 28, 2013 (Pink News) Thousands marched in Tokyo as **Japan** kicked off its first Rainbow Week, which aims to reach out to LGBT people in the country. Organizers of the parade estimated that 12,000 people took place in the parade.

April 29, 2013 (AP) American basketball star Jason Collins has spoken about his sexuality, confirming he's gay in an article to *Sports Illustrated* magazine. He's the first openly gay athlete in one of the big-four American team sports to come out as an active player. Collins, who has most recently played for the Washington Wizards and the Boston Celtics, wrote: "I'm a 34-year-old **NBA** center. I'm black. And I'm gay. I didn't set out to be the first openly gay athlete playing in a major American team sport. But since I am, I'm happy to start the conversation. I wish I wasn't the kid in the classroom raising his hand and saying, 'I'm different.' If I had my way, someone else would have already done this. Nobody has, which is why I'm raising my hand."

In a press conference the next day US President Barack Obama responded to a question about NBA player Jason Collins coming out, " I had a chance to talk to him yesterday; he seems like a terrific young man. I told him I couldn't be prouder. You know, one of the extraordinary measures of progress that we've seen in this country has been the recognition that the LGBT community deserves full equality — not just partial equality, not just tolerance — but a recognition that they're fully a part of the American family."

News from the LGBT Family Coalition

UPCOMING MEETINGS

JUNE AND JULY 2013:

◆ WEDNESDAY JUNE 5TH STARTING AT 7 P.M. ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND 15TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION (MONTRÉAL)

Our annual general assembly, followed by a celebration to mark the 15th anniversary of the LGBT Family Coalition. See attached flier. RSVP Please!

◆ TUESDAY, JUNE 11TH AT 7 P.M. MONTREAL: COURSE FOR FUTURE PARENTS – OUT IN THE WORLD : SURVIVING DAY CARE AND PRIMARY SCHOOL (FOR WOMEN AND MEN)

(For more information please see the flier on our website). Reservations necessary.
Location: Maison Parent-Roback, 110, rue Ste-Thérèse, Salle 105, Montréal, H2Y 1E6

◆ SATURDAY JUNE 15TH BEGINING AT 11 A.M. (IN CASE OF RAIN : SUNDAY JUNE 16) PICNIC AT THE PARC BOIS-DE-COULONGE IN QUÉBEC CITY

The LGBT Family Coalition, would like to invite all LGBT family members with or without children, as well as all our allies and friends, to a Community Picnic at the Park Bois-de-Coulonge.

Where: 1215 Grande-Allée Ouest (arrondissement Ste-Foy-Sillery). Free Parking.

By bus: routes 11, 25 and Metro-bus 800/801 (stop at René-Lévesque / Holland and then walk 5-10 minutes).

Meeting place: Children's playground

For more information please contact Jeanne at jlagabrielle@gmail.com or (418) 271-2595

**◆ THURSDAY JUNE 27TH TO MONDAY JULY 1ST
CAMPING AT YAMASKA PARK (SEPAQ)**

Activities : beach, marshmallows on the campfire, nature discovery activities for children and adults, hiking, cycling and water sports. Possibility to rent bikes, canoes, kayaks, pedal boats, rabaska, bicycle trailers for children and life jackets.

Places are still available for camping! For all questions about the activity or to sign up, please contact Émilie at 514-768-8537 or ejouvin@hotmail.com

**◆ SATURDAY JUNE 29TH AT 11 A.M.
BEACH DAY AT YAMASKA PARK (SEPAQ)**

Join the LGBT Family Coalition for a day at the beach!

For all questions about the activity please contact Émilie at 514-768-8537 or ejouvin@hotmail.com

AUGUST 2013 – PRIDE CELEBRATIONS

**◆ SATURDAY AUGUST 17TH and SUNDAY AUGUST 18TH
COMMUNITY DAY AND PRIDE PARADE: MONTREAL**

N.B.: The Pride Parade and Community Day have been scheduled for the weekend of August 18th and 19th. Please reserve this date in your calendars. We will give you an update on this in the weeks to come!

**◆ SATURDAY AUGUST 31ST
PRIDE COMMUNITY DAY: QUEBEC CITY**

N.B.: The Community Day has been scheduled for August 31st. Please reserve this date in your calendars. We will give you an update on this in the weeks to come!

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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♦ **THERE IS NO FREEDOM WITHOUT FINANCIAL FREEDOM - LA LIBERTÉ PERSONNELLE PASSE PAR LA LIBERTÉ FINANCIÈRE.** Financial services for individuals and small businesses: budgeting, debt management, investments, future planning, personal taxes, wealth enhancement strategies. 20% of all subsequent fees will be donated to the CFH. **J. Freed**, (514) 489-8633, www.jfreed.ca

♦ 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