



Coalition des  
Familles LGBT  
LGBT Family Coalition

## NEWSLETTER - VOLUME XVI - No. II – December 2014

### **Establishing Guidelines for Assisted Procreation**

(NB: this article was written in October 2014)

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

With the numerous budget cuts that we are beginning to experience with our new liberal government, many of us in the LGBT community are nervously waiting to see what will happen with the Assisted Procreation Program.

A bit of background: In August 2010, after much pressure from infertility lobby groups and Quebec high-profile TV personality, Julie Snyder, the liberal government of the time, with health minister Yves Bolduc, decided to put into place a program to cover assisted procreation (AP) treatments. Although this program was never a political demand of the LGBT Family Coalition, many of the future parents in our community benefitted from the fact that our RAMQ cards now covered AP. Before this program was put in place, lesbian couples and singles were paying about 700-800\$ per cycle for regular inseminations and anywhere between 4000-10,000\$ (depending on the time and the clinic) for an in vitro fertilization (IVF). Suddenly this all became free.

So it was inevitable that the huge expense of this program would soon become impossible to manage. In a healthcare system already fraught with budget problems, how could the government at the time imagine that this program would actually save money? It seems that their idea was that the program, which mandates physicians using IVF to implant only a single fertilized embryo at a time, would diminish the number of high-risk multiple pregnancies and, in this way, cut many pre- and postnatal costs. The tactic worked brilliantly in the sense that multiple births (twins and triplets) after IVF went down from around 35% to 17% (a huge success) but what wasn't factored into the equation, was that the amount of people using AP would skyrocket (currently about 30,000 a year) and so of course the absolute number of multiples per year is more than at the outset, and the program's price-tag exorbitant.

The whole notion of regulating the number of embryos implanted for IVFs is in itself a bit faulty: Firstly, why should doctors only abide by this practice if the program is government-funded? After all, aren't they supposed to carry out practices that are in the mother's and future child's best interest, as well as being cost-effective, without the need for government intervention? Secondly, what about the ovarian stimulation that so many women receive for regular inseminations (without IVF)? Is this always necessary (especially in the case of fertile lesbians), knowing that this too results in high rate of twins and triplets?

So with all of this about to come to an end, (as we are supposed to hear an announcement from the government in the next few months) what restrictions will be applied to this program?

Here are a few scenarios:

Scenario 1 is that the program will be cut completely and that we will go back to the old system where we have to pay for these treatments out of pocket. Yes, this is undemocratic in the sense that having to pay cold cash privileges individuals and couples who are well off. A system of reimbursement by tax credit could potentially help families with lower incomes.

Scenario 2 is that the government cuts out certain parts of the program. In February 2014 Gaetan Barrette (who was still the president of the FMSQ at the time - and not yet our health minister) publicly came out with

the false distinction between medical and social infertility (as if not being able to have a child was a medical illness). This little semantic game was proposed to cut costs by eliminating all lesbians, gays, trans and single women from the program. Fortunately, the *Commission à la santé et au bien-être* that was mandated to study the ethical issues around AP last fall asked for a separate legal opinion from jurists of the *Université de Sherbrooke* and their report explains quite clearly that discriminating against any one particular group is clearly an infringement on human rights that would not stand up in a court of law. It would be pure folly for the government to proceed in this direction. Not only would it be a waste of time and taxpayers' money (the LGBT community would launch a human rights case), but also an encouragement of homophobic attitudes within the population (witness the number of homophobes that come out of the woodwork each time this issue is raised in the media). Let's hope that Quebec doesn't regress 20 years...

But there will be cuts. The question is where?

Some proposals:

*Only one child per family:* Both partners would give their Medicare cards at the beginning of the treatment and the coverage would be limited to one child, or one completed cycle of treatments. This would mean that a family would have to pay for AP for its second child and even if the couple broke up, the partner in a new relationship could not retry again on the state's tab.

*Cutting out unrequired treatments:* Only the least medically invasive procedure necessary would be covered. What a great idea! Instead of women undergoing all kinds of treatments that are not medically necessary (and in addition can produce serious side effects) the state would only pay for indicated procedures. An example of this that comes up every now and then in the lesbian community would be that of two perfectly fertile women who ask the state to cover the harvesting of ovules from one partner (a medically invasive procedure that some say can even result in infertility) to be fertilized in vitro (a highly expensive technical procedure) and to be subsequently implanted in the second woman. All this so that one mother is genetically related and the other carries the baby. I know that this idea is much talked about in the lesbian community, but sorry, it is risky, expensive and really not what parenting is about. No one, especially the child, will remember or care about who's belly he/she was in or whose genes he/she carries.

*Restricting age limits:* This is perhaps a good idea too. An 18 year old who want to use the program can perhaps wait a few years and see where life takes her. After all she has many years of fertility ahead of her. And on the other end of the range: for older women, many clinics are already refusing women that are older than 42 or 43. Not because these clinics are mean or judgmental (although to some this would seem to be the case), but rather because the chance of success vs. the physical, emotional and financial impact is so disproportional that it just doesn't make sense. Regulations need to be put in place.

*And what about surrogacy?* Yes this should probably be covered (if other treatments are), but aside from Joel Legendre and his partner, we haven't heard of too many gay couples using their RAMQ cards for this. The truth of the matter is that for a gay couple surrogacy costs between 80-100,000\$. In the case of Joel Legendre RAMQ covered about 8000\$ of the total expense. For now the CF-LGBT is advocating that the government legislate to protect the practice of surrogacy so that proper contracts can be drawn up here in Quebec that benefit surrogates, prospective parents and future children. This is our priority. Once this is in place, families that are created through surrogacy should be treated equitably so that if our laws cover and protect surrogacy, the practice should of course be covered in government programs as well (whether we are talking about AP, parental leave, or any other program).

In the two briefs we submitted to the government last fall we also asked:

- 1) That long-term and short-term effects (for both mother and child), for all AP treatments, as well as their success rates should be monitored in a central registry.
- 2) That research on the causes of infertility becomes a priority.
- 3) That a central registry be established to track and store information regarding donor gametes (eggs, sperm and embryos)
- 4) That open-identity donors should be allowed and encouraged in Quebec.

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**Interested in writing for our newsletter? Send your articles at any time to [info@famillesLGBT.org](mailto:info@famillesLGBT.org) or by post to CF-LGBT, 110, rue Sainte-Thérèse, bureau 405, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1E6**  
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## **News Briefs: September - november 2014**

### **Quebec News**

**October 2** - In its quest to slash \$3 billion from the budget, the province is suspending an acclaimed anti-homophobia advertising campaign. The ad campaign slated for 2014-15 would have cost \$1 million, as part of five-year, \$7.1-million plan, launched in 2013 to get the public thinking about how open they really are to homosexuality.

The province is also putting a gender equality campaign on the back burner that would have cost \$500,000. "This year, we're in a situation where the budget asks us to limit the publicity and different expenses within the department," said Stéphanie Vallée, Quebec's Minister of Justice, who is also responsible for the province's anti-homophobia strategy.

"I understand the perception of it, but at the same time, it's a decision that we've had to make. Are we going to cut on publicity? Or are we going to cut on direct help? And my decision was to go and support directly the groups."

**November 7** - Proposed plans to reduce the amount of coverage Quebec provides to residents in need of fertility treatments would hurt single women and same-sex couples. In 2010, Quebec became the first province to cover all the costs associated with in vitro fertilization, but the program was so popular it quickly went over budget.

Health Minister Gaetan Barrette has said he intends to reveal changes to the program in the coming weeks, which may include limiting access to the program to infertile couples. Advocates for provincially funded fertility treatments say it lowers health care costs because the program only allows single embryos to be transferred into a woman's womb, rather than as many as possible which often results in multiple births.

**28 novembre 2014** – Free and unlimited access to Quebec's assisted procreation program will soon be a thing of the past. Women who have a fertility problem and were hoping for the government to help out, will now have to pay for these treatments, according to a bill tabled by Quebec's Minister of Health, Gaetan Barrette.

Those who are less well off however will be able to apply for a reimbursement at the end of the year through a tax credit. The reimbursement that the government provides will vary according to the family's annual revenue. If the bill is adopted, tax credits for fertility treatments will allow in vitro fertilisation treatments to remain financially accessible. A family earning \$50,000 a year or less would be given a tax break equal to 80 per cent of the procedure's cost. The tax credit slides down progressively to 20 per cent for families making \$120,000 or more a year. But only one cycle of assisted procreation would be covered for women 37 years old or under, while two cycles would be covered for women 38-42 years of age.

Couples where the man has had a vasectomy or the woman has had her tubes tied, as well as those who already have a child, will not be eligible for a reimbursement. The program will be offered to heterosexual and same-sex couples, as well as to single women. Gay male couples will be able to resort to surrogacy and the surrogate mother can use her RAMQ card and be eligible for reimbursement according to her annual income.

Good news: The medical act of artificial insemination will continue to be covered by RAMQ. It is not yet clear whether or not the cost of sperm will be covered. In addition, transitory measures will be put in place to allow those who have already begun a cycle of assisted procreation to complete the cycle free of charge.

The modifications in the proposed law follow the recommendations published in the *Avis détaillé sur les activités de procréation assistée au Québec* as put forward by the *Commissaire à la santé et au bien-être*. The government is hoping to save 48 million dollars through these changes.

## Canada News

**October 1<sup>st</sup>** - It began when the city of Iqaluit raised a rainbow flag at city hall to protest anti-gay laws in Russia during the 2014 Winter Olympics, at the initiative of city Councillor Kenny Bell and Iqaluit resident Anubha Momin. Councillor Simon Nattaq argued that the decision had not been approved by council, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc president Cathy Towtongie commended Nattaq for speaking out. These events sparked lively discussion among the residents of Nunavut about same-sex issues, including whether it's within Inuit custom to be gay. In the midst of this discussion, the idea for a party emerged, specifically, an Iqaluit Pride party, the first of its kind in the capital city of Nunavut.

The party is the latest in a long series of steps toward same-sex rights and presence in Nunavut, all developing within the unique context of Canada's newest territory.

What seems to be emerging in Nunavut is a unique new culture, one that blends Inuit and non-Inuit, as well as straight and gay elements. This fusion was especially reflected in the cross-cultural elements of September's Iqaluit Pride party, which featured a lip-synching contest hosted by Zsa Zsa LaWhore, Inuit throat singing, hip-hop dancing and a Greenlandic mask dancer telling a story about same-sex love.

Iqaluit was ready for a new Pride event. On Sept 27, the party filled to capacity within an hour of doors opening, and there was a line out the door for most of the night.

**October 2** - When cereal giant General Mills Inc. faced criticism over a television commercial last year that featured a biracial family, the company could have backed down. Instead it brought the family back for its most expensive and high-profile commercial of the year, in the 2014 Super Bowl. Now General Mills Canada is following suit.

The new Canadian campaign for Cheerios presents a deliberately diverse collection of real stories about love, with television commercials and longer online videos. The stories include a physically disabled man and his able-bodied wife, a gay couple talking about how they adopted their daughter, who is of a different race, among others.

The campaign, developed by ad agency Cossette, is based around the concept of "The Cheerios Effect," the phenomenon where surface tension causes objects floating in liquid to gravitate toward each other or toward the side of the container. The ads use this as an analogy for human connection: 15-second television spots will introduce the people featured in various personal stories, pointing viewers to longer versions of those stories online.

In one video, André and Jonathan describe how they fell in love, and tell the story of adopting their daughter Raphaëlle. In the emotional video, they acknowledge that this would not have been possible for a gay couple in earlier times. To see the ad: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvHGKSqBVjs>

**October 9** - A police force and a major civil-liberties group are among those calling on senators to pass a long-delayed transgender rights bill opposed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, saying the bill is needed to fight violence against the trans community.

The testimonies came as a Senate committee continued its consideration of Bill C-279, which would add gender identity as a basis for protection under anti-hate crime protections in the Criminal Code and also under

the Canadian Human Rights Act. The bill was passed by the House of Commons last year, but it has wallowed in the Senate for 19 months.

Most witnesses who testified support the bill, though many are divided on its wording – namely, whether it should include or delete a definition of “gender identity.” Ottawa Police Superintendent Don Sweet urged the government to pass the bill so that investigators have more tools to protect transgender people.

“Those who have been impacted by these targeted crimes have expressed frustration that the justice system seems blind to these premeditated acts [against trans victims] and fails to recognize their vulnerability,” Supt. Sweet told the senators, saying the bill will help build trust between police and the trans community. The bill “sends the right message to society that hate will not be tolerated,” and will allow police to reach out to victims “who may have been deterred [from reporting a crime] previously,” the officer added.

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association said the trans community is disproportionately targeted with violence and also called for the bill’s passage – in particular urging the Senate to deal with the bill quickly so that it does not die before the federal election scheduled for next year.

## **LGBT Marriage News**

**August 20** - A federal judge rules that **Indiana** must recognize the legal marriages of same-sex couples who wed in other states, marking the 37th pro-equality ruling from federal or state courts since last summer's landmark LGBT victories at the U.S. Supreme Court. The order is now on hold until the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals decides the case — or any of the four other cases seeking marriage equality in Indiana — meaning same-sex couples cannot yet legally marry in Indiana.

**August 25** - Xavier Bettel, the openly gay prime minister of **Luxembourg** announces that he will be one of the first to marry under the country’s new law allowing same-sex marriages.

**August 25** - A federal judge in **Florida** declares that the state’s interdiction of marriage between same-sex partners is unconstitutional. The ban on same-sex marriage had been added to Florida’s constitution after a public referendum in 2008. **The possibility for Floridian couples to marry will be delayed however** in order to allow this and other suspended decisions to be reviewed by the US Supreme Court.

**September 4** - A federal judge in **Louisiana** throws a roadblock on what advocates thought would be an expressway toward establishing gay marriage as a fundamental national right, ruling that the state's ban on such unions was constitutional. In a 32-page decision, U.S. District Judge Martin L.C. Feldman also upholds Louisiana's refusal to recognize same-sex marriages performed legally in other states.

**September 5** - A three-judge panel of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously upholds a U.S. district court ruling striking down bans on same-sex marriage in **Indiana** and **Wisconsin**.

**September 7** – **Egyptian** police arrest seven men for taking part in a gay wedding video that went viral on social media, accusing them of inciting debauchery and undermining public morals. The seven are arrested after appearing in the video purporting to show the country's first gay marriage as two men exchanged rings surrounded by friends.

**September 8** – A first couple is united in **Croatia** following last summer’s legal recognition of same-sex couples. Croatia affords the same rights to homosexual as to heterosexual couples with the exception of the possibility to adopt children.

**September 15** - The mayor of **Paris** has celebrated the 2000th same-sex marriage having taken place in her city, saying she is “delighted”. A law recognizing equal marriage took effect in May, which followed months of sometimes violent protests and a rise in homophobic attacks.

**September 15** - The city of **Bologna** begins to recognize the marriages of same-sex couples who married overseas. The Italian city – which has a population of 380,000 – announces that the couples can have their marriages registered at the city hall.

**September 26** - The **Sagkeeng First Nation in Manitoba** hosts its first wedding between two women. The wedding is a first for the community.

**October 6** - A coalition of more than 120 civic groups protests outside the **Taiwanese** parliament in Taipei demanding the legalization of gay marriage. Organizers, the Marriage Equality Revolution Front, estimate 20,000 people participated in the 'rainbow siege' outside the Legislative Yuan but media reports put the number at 2,000-4,000.

**October 6** - The **United States** Supreme Court won't hear any of the seven cases regarding marriage equality in five states, which means lower court decisions ruling in favor of same-sex marriage will stand and could quickly spread to other states in their jurisdiction. With the court's decision not to hear those cases, bans on same-sex marriage in **Utah, Indiana, Wisconsin, Virginia, and Oklahoma** are immediately reversed and couples will soon be able to wed.

A round of legal uncertainty could be in the near future for couples in states also within those circuits where the effect of the Supreme Court's decision may quickly spread — **West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming**.

For now, 24 states and the District of Columbia extend full marriage rights to same-sex couples.

**October 9** - **Estonia** opens civil union and adoption to homosexual couples, a position that is in opposition to other former USSR countries. Adoptions however are limited to adoptions within a family where one of the partners is already biologically related or legally recognized as the parent.

**October 10** - The states of **Idaho** and **North Carolina** begin to authorize same-sex marriage applications.

**October 12** - A federal judge strikes down **Alaska's** ban on same-sex marriage.

**October 18** - The gay marriage debate arrives within walking distance of the Vatican as **Rome's** mayor registers 16 gay marriages celebrated abroad in open defiance of Italy's government. Gay marriage is illegal in Italy. Interior Minister Angelino Alfano recently sent a notice to local prefects saying any registrations of gay marriages celebrated abroad would be voided, and Rome's prefect has vowed to do so immediately.

**October 21** - A federal judge in **Puerto Rico** upholds the U.S. territory's ban on same-sex marriage, going against the trend of pro-equality rulings over the past year.

**November 7** - A federal judge in **Missouri** finds that the state's constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage violates the U.S. Constitution's equal protection and due process clauses. There is a stay on the order pending an appeal from the state, meaning same-sex couples cannot yet marry statewide, but advocates close to the case suggest that Missouri's attorney general is unlikely to file an appeal — which means couples should soon be able to marry in the Show-Me State.

**November 9** - Two brides in **Russia** officially marry without violating the country's ban on same-sex marriages after exploiting a loophole in the law. Irina Shumilova and Alyona Fursova arrive at a registry office in St Petersburg holding bouquets of flowers and wearing traditional white wedding dresses to tie the knot in the presence of family and friends. The couple are likely to escape punishment as one of the brides is not legally a woman as she describes herself as transsexual rather than transgender. "Yes, in my passport it says 'male'," says Irina.

The Family Code of Russia claims that marriage is "a voluntary consent of a man and a woman" but Irina and Alyona consider themselves to be the first LGBT married couple in the country.

**November 13** - The United States Supreme Court authorizes same-sex couples to marry in **Kansas**, the 33<sup>rd</sup> out of 50 American states where same-sex marriage is now legal. The decision takes effect immediately.

**November 13** - An American appeals court covering four states rejects, for the first time, the possibility for same-sex couples to marry, resisting the current trend in favour of same-sex marriages. The case will most likely be heard by the Supreme Court. The appeals court covers **Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky**.

## International News

**August 20 (Reuters)** - Birth certificates in **California** will be changed to more accurately reflect families in which parents are of the same gender under a bill passed by the legislature. The bill will allow parents to identify themselves as father, mother or parent when a child is born, a nuanced change from the current birth certificate that backers say is more reflective of growing rights and acceptance for same-sex couples. The applications for the new birth certificates, which will be available in 2016, allow both parents to choose any of the three ways to identify themselves - as mother, father or simply as a parent.

**September 4 (Advocate)** The National Violence Against Women survey (**US**) found that 21.5 percent of men and 35.4 percent of women living with a same-sex partner experienced intimate-partner physical violence in their lifetimes, compared with 7.1% and 20.4% for men and women, respectively, with a history of only opposite-sex cohabitation. Transgender respondents had an incidence of 34.6 percent over a lifetime according to a Massachusetts survey.

The CDC's 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, released again in 2013 with new analysis, reports in its first-ever study focusing on victimization by sexual orientation that the lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner was 43.8 percent for lesbians, 61.1 percent for bisexual women, and 35 percent for heterosexual women, while it was 26 percent for gay men, 37.3 percent for bisexual men, and 29 percent for heterosexual men (this study did not include gender identity or expression).

These studies refute the myths that only straight women get battered, that men are never victims, and that women never batter — in other words, that domestic violence is not an LGBT issue. In fact, it is one of our most serious health risks, affecting significant numbers within our communities.

**August 28 (Gay Star News)** A court in **Switzerland** has made the historic decision to recognize two men as the legal parents of a child born to a surrogate mom in the United States – despite surrogacy being illegal in the country. The two men, who live together in a registered partnership, are originally from the St Gallen region of northeast Switzerland. They became fathers through the use of a surrogate mom in California, with the child being conceived through artificial insemination, a donor egg and the sperm of one of the men.

In California, where surrogacy is legal, the child's birth certificate listed the men as the child's fathers, recognizing that the surrogate mother and her husband did not wish to exercise their parental rights. However, under Swiss law, the mom and her husband would still normally be considered the parents.

The two men petitioned authorities to be listed as the child's fathers in the Swiss national registry and were supported by the St Gallen Department of Home Affairs. However, the country's Federal Office of Justice (FOJ) appealed against the petition to the St Gallen administrative court, prompting the court to make a ruling. In doing so, the court decided to recognize the Californian birth certificate, ruling that the child's welfare was the most important priority in the case. The court stated that a note of the child's genetic parentage should be recorded on the Swiss birth certificate – partially upholding the FOJ's complaint – but that the two men could

be listed as fathers to the child. The FOJ may still appeal the decision by taking the matter to the Switzerland Federal Court but has not yet announced whether it plans to do so.

In general, Switzerland has a good record for LGBT rights but when it comes to family-building, there remains a ban on same-sex couples adopting, stepchild-adoption, and on lesbians accessing IVF treatment.

**August 31 (Care2) California's** state Assembly approved a bill that would ban attorneys from using the gay or trans panic defense to lessen the sentence of violent criminals who've murdered LGBT people.

The bill, known as AB2501, was approved by a 50-10 vote. The legislation is supported by the American Bar Association and by California's attorney general Kamala Harris as well as LGBT groups.

Rick Zbur, executive director-elect of EQCA, which has campaigned for the bill, says that the panic defense is a relic that should have been stripped from California law a long time ago. "This defense legitimizes prejudice and hate, and it should play absolutely no part in California's justice system," Zbur is quoted as saying. "This bill helps eliminate anti-LGBT bias as a 'reasonable' basis to ease the punishment for violent crimes against LGBT people."

**September 9 (Human Rights First)** The passage of a discriminatory bill by **Gambia's** National Assembly represents an alarming trend threatening the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Africans. The bill, which now awaits approval by President Yahya Jammeh, calls for life sentences for some homosexual acts determined to be "aggravated homosexuality." The bill is similar in language and penalty to the egregious Anti-Homosexuality Act that was recently struck down in Uganda.

Gambian President Jammeh has made it clear in public statements that he would likely support anti-gay legislation, [calling](#) homosexuality one of the "biggest threats to human existence."

**September 14 (Hispanically Speaking News)** A **Brazilian** judge has ruled that in the civil register, the name of a baby girl may officially appear with the name of the father, two mothers - the biological mother and her current partner - and six grandparents, in an unprecedented decision in this country, according to judicial sources cited in local media.

Judge Rafael Cuña of the 4th Civil Court of Santa Maria in the southern state of Rio Grande del Sul, bordering Argentina and Uruguay, thus ruled in favor of a plea by the biological parents and the partner of the mother of the baby born last Aug. 27, according to a communiqué from the state Court of Justice.

The baby was born through conventional insemination and had a normal birth after Luis Guilherme Calfield, a friend of the two women, accepted their request to fertilize the ovum of one of them, on condition that his name would appear as the father in the civil registration of the baby's birth, and in which the parents of all three would figure as grandparents. The biological mother, Fernanda Battagli Kropeniski, 26, and her companion, Mariani Guedes Santiago, 27, have been together for four years and were legally married two years ago.

**September 11 (Gay Star News)** Three **Chinese** activist groups sent an open letter to 112 universities demanding better education and protection for LGBTI students in time for the national Teachers' Day celebrations. The letter asked universities to correct discriminatory teaching materials and offer gender diversity courses, and was jointly signed by Changsha-based China Same Sex Love (CSSL), Beijing-based LGBT Rights Advocacy China and Nanjing-based anti-discrimination group Justice for All.

The letter said, 'We appeal and encourage principals at various universities to play a positive role in gender equality education, to face up to the basic demands of sexual-minority students including gays, bisexuals and transgenders. When gay students are facing bullies, please guarantee their rights and offer them psychological support. When the university's regulations violate the rights of gay students, please be brave and make changes. We always believe that as a place with relatively open culture and thinking, a university is meant to cultivate hope and the future of the country, and it should accept different voices and groups.'

A recent survey of 90 psychology textbooks conducted by the Gay and Lesbian Campus Association in China found that only 42 had content related to homosexuality, of which 40% of those written after 2001 still classified homosexuality as a mental illness.

**September 19 (Advocate)** This year, the **U.S. Census** will start recording households headed by legally married same-sex couples as "families."

Previously, any citizen who indicated they were married to a person of the same gender on their census form would automatically be re-categorized as an "unmarried partner." Unmarried partnerships were not tallied as a "family" in official reports of census data.

Now, the largest census form, the American Community Survey, has been released with the changed policy, which was crafted in the wake of the Supreme Court's 2013 decision to strike down part of the Defense of Marriage Act and allow the federal government to recognize legally married same-sex couples, and extend to them the same federal benefits as other married couples. This is the U.S. Census Bureau's most significant shift in how it counts queer citizens since 1990, when the Bureau first started counting same-sex couples as partnerships.

**September 23 (Pink News)** The top civil court in **France** has ruled that authorities must allow same-sex couples to adopt, regardless of how the child was conceived. The Court of Cassation has ruled that even if a child is conceived using IVF, technically illegal for gay parents in France, it should not stop their legal right to adopt.

In the past, many courts had refused to allow the adoption of children who were born abroad to lesbian couples who used IVF. The current ruling by the court allows "by adoption, the establishment of a family link between a child and two people of the same sex, without any restriction relative to the mode of conception of the child." Despite that the ruling is advisory, and not enforceable, the Court of Cassation's rulings are usually regarded as precedent used by lower courts.

**September 25 (Advocate)** The **International Olympic Committee** has taken an important step toward welcoming LGBT athletes and fans at the Olympic Games, announcing it has added an antidiscrimination clause to its host city contract. The announcement comes as an indirect response to concerns leading up to the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, about the well-being of LGBT people in a country marred by intolerance.

Principle 6 of the Olympic Charter does not as of yet ban discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, but it does state that discrimination in general is "incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement." The antidiscrimination clause added to the host country contract reflects this philosophy, said IOC spokesman Mark Adams.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Olympic Committee amended its code of conduct to expressly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in October 2013.

FIFA, the international governing body of the World Cup, is also feeling pressure from LGBT rights groups to consider the safety of LGBT fans and players as it make its host country selections. The 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cups are currently slated to be held in Russia and Qatar, respectively. Both countries have antigay laws on the books.

**October 2 (Gay Star News)** Quezon City Council approved a city ordinance banning discrimination against LGBTI people. The law was passed unanimously by more than 30 city councilors after a marathon eight-hour session. Quezon City is the most populous city in the **Philippines** and the largest city in the Metro Manila capital region.

'This is very special and better than other ordinances, because it not only penalizes actions, but there is also affirmative action. This is an early gift ahead of the Quezon City pride march in December,' said Ging Cristobal, project coordinator for the Asia Pacific region of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission.

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

### **DECEMBER 2014**

#### **◆ MONDAY DECEMBER 1<sup>st</sup> AT 7 PM TRANSGENDER PARENT - MOVIE**

The LGBT Family Coalition and Cinema Politica are proud to announce the launching of a documentary film on trans\* parenting. TRANSGENDER PARENTS is about love, life and kids after a gender transition. It shares the struggles and strengths of several trans women and trans men navigating different stages of parenting: from pregnancy, through raising infants, toddlers and teenagers.

**Cinema Politica, Concordia University  
1455, de Maisonneuve, West  
ROOM: H-110**

#### **◆ SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup> FROM 2 – 5 PM 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 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 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 11TH at 5:30 P.M. QUEBEC CITY: HOLIDAY PARTY**

GRIS-Quebec, Alliance arc-en-ciel-Quebec. ATQ-Quebec and the Quebec-City Branch of the LGBT Family Coalition invite you to a Community Christmas Party! Snacks, music and fun for all !!

Volunteers and kids: free

Others: 5\$

**Location: 363, de la Couronne - bureau 202, Quebec (Quebec)  
Please confirm your presence by e-mail: [info@grisquebec.org](mailto:info@grisquebec.org)**

### **January 2015:**

#### **◆ SUNDAY, JANUARY 18TH AT 3 PM QUEBEC CITY : MATCH DES REMPARTS DE QUÉBEC**

**For more info please contact Mona Belleau : [monabelleau@gmail.com](mailto:monabelleau@gmail.com)**

#### **◆ SUNDAY JANUARY 25TH AT 9:30 A.M. – 11 A.M. GET-TOGETHER FOR YOUNG PARENTS**

Discussion group for parents with young children (up to about 2 years old)  
Songs and stories for kids with a discussion group for parents on the topic chosen by parents who are present  
Espresso for the parents and snacks for all.

**Location: L'espace café at the boutique La Culotte à l'Envers, 3162 Masson, Montréal, H1Y 1Y1**

Please RSVP with Emilie [ejouvin@hotmail.com](mailto:ejouvin@hotmail.com) or on the Facebook page of the Coalition

◆ **SUNDAY JANUARY 25TH AT 9:30 A.M.**  
**BOWLING PARTY FOR LGBT FAMILIES**

Details to follow...

◆ **WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28TH 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

**FEBRUARY 2015:**

◆ **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> AT 10 A.M.**  
**SLEDDING AND SLIDING AT MONT TOURBILLON (QUEBEC CITY)**

Details to follow...

◆ **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH AT 7:00 P.M.**  
**CONFERENCE ON GENDER FLEXIBLE PARENTING**

Details to follow...

Location: UQAM

◆ **SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21ST AT 10 A.M.**  
**MONTREAL: FAMILY SLEDDING ACTIVITY**

Location: Pélican Park

Meeting place on the corner of boulevard Saint-Joseph and rue Molson in Rosemont

Bring your sleds and your energy !

◆ **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD 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

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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), [11](http://www.dorshei-</a></b></p></div><div data-bbox=)**

**emet**, 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@famillesLGBT.org](mailto:info@famillesLGBT.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@famillesLGBT.org](mailto:info@famillesLGBT.org) or by post to CF-LGBT, 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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