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Welcoming Schools Cambridge Newsletter

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Welcoming Schools Cambridge
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New Address

Sometime in early November my office will be moving to the Family Resource Center's new home at **15 Upton St.**, just outside of Central Square. Until then you can find me at the Family Resource Center, which is attached to Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School.

Please drop by for a visit, information about schools or to borrow resources from the Welcoming Schools Cambridge library of books and films.

CRLS Tours For Parents of Eighth Graders

Beginning on 10/7/08, tours of the High School will be offered on Tuesdays, from 8:30 AM, by appointment only. (Please note that there will be NO TOUR on 10/14/08 due to parent-teacher conferences. Tours will resume on Tuesday, 10/21/08).

For more information, contact JoAnne Ackman, CRLS Parent Liaison
617-349-6660 or
jackman@cpsd.us

Welcoming Schools Cambridge is a program of the Cambridge Public School District, supporting safe and affirming schools for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender families and youth in Cambridge.

City Of Cambridge Survey

The City of Cambridge is conducting a survey covering a range of issues dealing with city services in order to evaluate what the city does well and where improvements can be made. Results from the survey will assist the City Manager and the Cambridge City Council in setting priority focus areas for the next couple of years. While 400 Cambridge residents will receive random phone calls on behalf of the city, other residents who wish to participate in the survey can do so from now until Sept. 29, 2008 by visiting the web address listed below. Let your voice be heard!

http://www.cambridgema.gov/CityOfCambridge_Content/documents/2008CityofCambridgeSurvey.pdf

Danehy Park Family Day Saturday, Sept. 20

11:00 AM—4:00 PM

(Rain date: Sunday, Sept. 21)

Enjoy a fun-filled day of children's amusement rides, arts and crafts, music and roving performers, plus free hot dogs, chips, sodas, and T-shirts while supplies last! Check out performances throughout the day at the Children's Stage. Other special giveaways include colorful kites that appeal to kids of all ages!

Story Walk Cambridge Sept. 17-Oct. 15

Walk along Rindge Ave.

Search for pages from Eric Carle's book,
From Head To Toe!

Opening Celebration

Wednesday, 9/17

6:00-7:00 PM

Jefferson Park Community Room
1 Jackson Place (off Rindge Ave.)

Free Dinner, Kids Balloon Show, Storytelling, Art, Books

C.O.L.A.G.E. News

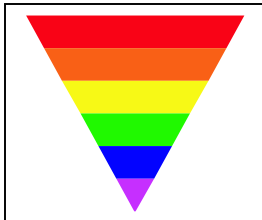
Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere

We are a national organization of children, youth, and adults with one or more lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer (LGBTQ) parents. We build community and work toward social justice through youth empowerment, leadership development, education, and advocacy.

Whether you already know lots of other people with LGBTQ parents, or always thought you were the only one, COLAGE is a source of friendship and understanding. It is a place where you can talk about your family with complete honesty and pride. COLAGE is an organization that accepts your family AND celebrates it!

Come meet kids from other families like yours for pizza on October 14, 2008 at 6:00 PM at the Democracy Center (45 Mt. Auburn St. in Harvard Square). Discuss common themes; share experiences and work on projects. Suggested donation is \$10.00.

More information at <http://www.boston@colage.org>



QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

**Please Save the Date!!
Citywide LGBT Town Meeting
Oct. 22, 2008
Details to Follow**

Foster Care Do You Have What It Takes?

Cambridge Family & children's Service (CFCS) is looking for foster families in Cambridge. All kinds of families are needed and several types of foster care are possible. Your availability and desired level of commitment will determine what you choose. If you are over 21 years of age and already MAPP trained or willing to become trained, you can consider becoming a foster parent. Options include **Intensive Foster Care** (in which you provide a substitute home where a child can grow and develop in a safe environment); **Emergency Foster Care** (which provides immediate, short-term care for a child or children in crisis); and **Respite Care** (which provides temporary care for children whose foster families are unavailable to care for them for short periods of time). Find out what it takes!

For more information about foster care please contact CFCS
617-876-4210
www.helpfamilies.org

Greater Boston PFLAG
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Inc.
2008 Annual Meeting
Thursday, September 25th, 7:00 PM
First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington
630 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476.

Keynote Speaker: State Rep. Byron Rushing
"What's Been Accomplished; What Lies Ahead?"

Cambridge Area Adoptive Parent Group

Join us at a parent run group for adoptive parents, as well as kin, guardian and foster parents. Others personally connected to adoption, including birth parents or adults who were adopted, are also invited to participate.

Meeting Location: Harvest Co-op
581 Mass Ave Central Square; 2nd Floor Community Room
Second Fridays of each month, 7-9 PM
Sept 12th; Oct 10th; Nov 14th; Dec 12th 2008
For more information call 617-587-1563 or contact:

Nora O'Farrell at nofarrell@mस्पcc.org
Or Randi Schalet at rgschalet@comcast.net

Thoughts From the LGBT Liaison

Getting The School Year Off to A Good Start

Welcoming Schools Cambridge

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The beginning of the school year is a good time to think about ways to support the teachers and staff who work with our kids. Teachers and school personnel all want to foster academic achievement, while at the same welcoming families and students, and providing for the physical and emotional safety of everyone in the school. Kids need to be able to focus on learning. But they cannot do that if they are burdened with keeping the secret of their family safe, if they are worried about being targeted and bullied for their identities, or if they end up being the ones to educate the adults who should be educating them.

It is essential that we lay the groundwork for our children's achievement and safety by making sure that the adults to whom all students look for guidance know (and can talk about) many different ways of making family.

My job is to work within the schools to educate and support school staff about gender, equity and *all* kinds of families. You can help by being sure that your child's teachers and school personnel know who you are *and* that these topics are important to you. Here

are some ways to get started.

1. If you are a parent or guardian you can introduce yourself to the people at your child's school at the beginning of the year so that they can get to know you. Be sure to tell your child's teacher what your child calls you and how you like to be addressed.

2. Look for LGBT-friendly books and films in the classroom and in your school and branch libraries. Each school library has a Gender Resources Notebook for teachers to use as a reference and guide. I will be updating them this year, so please let me know if you have suggestions or know of resources to include. You might also consider donating a book to a school or classroom library.

3. Join the local chapter of Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE) or Parents and Friends of Lesbian and Gays (PFLAG).

4. Support Project 10 East, the Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) at CRLS (the Cambridge public high school).

5. Speak out against comments that demean individuals or groups, including jokes and slurs that target LGBT

families and individuals.

6. If you attend religious services encourage those in charge to welcome and support LGBT families and individuals.

7. Attend the GLBT Town Meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 22, as well as other events sponsored by Welcoming Schools Cambridge to make sure that you have a voice in local affairs. This is also a great way to meet other families like yours with whom you can make connections.

We need to prepare the children of Cambridge to live in the world of the future, as well as the one that currently exists. No one knows which identity a child will grow up to choose. We don't always know who has LGBT family members or friends, or who lives next door to someone who is LGBT. We *do* know that the world today requires a level of cultural competence far beyond what many of us learned as children, and the world our children are growing into will be even more complex. We need to help *all* children learn to welcome and celebrate differences—for the world we live in today and for the one they will live in tomorrow.

LGBT Resources in the Cambridge/Boston Area

- **BAGLY (Boston Alliance of Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Youth)**
PO Box 814
Boston, MA 02103
617-227-4313
Youth group meets weekly and sponsors events. Gay group which is especially welcoming to transgender kids.
<http://www.bagly.org>
- **Bisexual Resource Center**
PO Box 400639
Cambridge, MA 02140
617-424-9595
Resource center for bisexuals, including youth and adults. Also sponsors events and discussion groups.
<http://www.biresource.org>
- **Boston GLASS (Gay and Lesbian Adolescent Social Services)**
93 Mass. Ave., Floor 3
Boston, MA 02116
617-266-3349
Drop-in center for GLBT youth (ages 13-25) offering support and culturally sensitive resources.
<http://www.bostonglass.org>
- **Boston Pride**
398 Columbus Ave. #285
Boston, MA 02116
617-262-9405
Working to enhance the visibility of Boston's LGBT community through a week of events each June, in conjunction with year round activities, to promote LGBT awareness, dignity, and understanding.
<http://www.bostonpride.org>
- **Cambridge GLBT Commission**
The GLBT Commission meets on the fourth Monday of every month (except August and December), from 6-8 p.m., at the Cambridge Citywide Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Ave. Meetings are open to the public.
<http://www.cambridgema.gov/>
- **Cambridge Men's Group**
A social group for gay and bi men.
- **COLAGE: Greater Boston Chapter**
PO Box 441942
Somerville, MA 02144
617-267-0900 x 446
Children, youth, and adults with one or more lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer (LGBTQ) parents, building community and working toward social justice through youth empowerment, leadership development, education, and advocacy.
<http://www.colage.org/boston>
- **Fenway Community Health Center, Lesbian/Gay Family and Parenting Services**
7 Haviland St.
Boston, MA 02115
617-927-6243
Comprehensive health care in a welcoming environment. □
<http://www.fenwayhealth.org/>
- **The Freedom To Marry Coalition of Massachusetts**
11 Beacon Street
Suite 1125
Boston, MA 02108
617-482-1600
Grassroots education, advocacy, and lobbying in support of civil marriage rights for same-sex couples.
<http://www.equalmarriage.org/>
- **Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD)**
294 Washington Street; Suite 740
Boston, MA 02108
617-426-1350
New England legal rights organization dedicated to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, HIV status and gender identity and expression.
<http://www.glad.org>
- **Gay Fathers of Greater Boston**
PO Box 1373
Boston, MA 02205
617-742-7897

- Divorced, separated and married fathers, some in committed relationships with other out, sexuality, and relationships with children, partners, and spouses (current or ex).
<http://www.gayfathersboston.org>
- **Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)**
 3 Heath St. □
 Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
 617-536-9669
 National organization making schools safer for ALL students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
<http://chapters.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/boston/home.html>
 - **GLBT Parenting In Greater Boston**
 Free Yahoo group addresses the unique social and emotional needs of GLBT people who are actively parenting children.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parenting-in-greater-boston/>
 - **Greater Boston PFLAG**
 (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
 P.O. Box 541619
 Waltham, MA 02454-1659
 Waltham Office: 781-891-5966
 Provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.
<http://www.gbpflag.org/>
 - **International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE)**
 PO Box 540229
 Waltham, MA 02454-0229
 Promotes self-definition and free expression of individual gender identity. Publishes *Transgender Tapestry*.
<http://www.ifge.org/>
 - **Keshet**
 58 Glen Rd. #3
 Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
 A fully welcoming and inclusive Jewish community for GLBT Jews in Boston area.
<http://www.boston-keshet.org/>
- men. Meetings provide a forum for talking about issues including parenting, coming
- **Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus**
 PO Box 246, State House
 Boston, MA 02133
 617-262-1565
 Largest statewide lesbian and gay political lobbying organization in MA.
<http://www.mglpc.org/>
 - **Massachusetts Area South Asian Lambda Association (MASALA)**
 Safe and supportive social environment for New England based Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning South Asians (people from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Tibet; and from the global South Asian Diaspora).
<http://www.bostonmasala.org/>
 - **Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (MTPC)**
 Dedicated to ending discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression.
<http://www.masstpc.org/tp/>
 - **Queer Asian Pacific Alliance (QAPA)**
 Social, political, and educational environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning women and men of Asian and Pacific Islander (A/PI) heritage in the Boston and New England area. This is inclusive of A/PIs, A/PI Americans and those who are of mixed A/PI heritage.
<http://www.qapa.org/>
 - **Stonewall Communities**
 P.O. Box 990035, Prudential Center,
 Boston, MA 02199. 617-369-9090
 Residential, educational, social and support for LGBT elders, including the Stonewall Communities Lifelong Learning Institute at Wheelock College.
<http://www.stonewallcommunities.com>