

TORONTO PFLAG

Parents, families, friends and allies of Toronto's LGBTQ* community

January/February 2015 Newsletter #48

www.torontopflag.org

office@pflagtoronto.org

TORONTO PFLAG VISION

Toronto PFLAG is a charitable organization that speaks for a more accepting Canadian society by providing support, education and resources to all people who wish to grow in their understanding of sexual and gender diversity.

Toronto PFLAG actively assists in the recognition and growth of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, intersex, queer and questioning persons, and their families and friends, within their diverse cultures and societies.

NEXT WEST END SUPPORT MEETINGS

Tuesday
March 10, 2015
and
April 14, 2015

7:30 p.m.

St. Olave's Church
(side entrance)
360 Windermere Ave.,
Toronto, ON M6S 3L4



Jim and Mike at Raptors Game

NEXT EAST END SUPPORT MEETINGS

Wednesday
April 1, 2015
and
May 6, 2015

7:30 p.m.

Kimbourne Park
United Church
200 Wolverleigh Blvd.,
Toronto, ON M4C 1S2

A message from your President

February 27, 2015

A new curriculum in Ontario

On February 23rd, Ontario's Education Minister announced a new health and sexual education curriculum for Ontario.

The announcement followed a gap of 5 years where even more consultations took place to try and build support for the new curriculum after an earlier, carefully orchestrated backlash caused former Premier Dalton McGuinty to pull planned changes. The previous curriculum was put in place in 1998 when sexting wasn't even a thing.

Sexual orientation and families with two moms or dads will now be discussed in Grade Three as parts of a larger discussion about similarities and differences and things we can and cannot change.

Anyone who has seen a PFLAG presentation in elementary school since before I was a member will recognize the themes above as the EXACT content we have used over the years.

I used them today in a group of Grade 5 and 6 students. And here's the thing: these kids are so far beyond these themes in their understanding. They want to know why discrimination discriminates. Why target men with sodomy laws and leave lesbians alone? They wondered if homophobia (fear) has morphed into hate. They asked if trans people aren't trans anymore when they are "finished".

Such engaged questions.

We need to stop being afraid to discuss these very human stories. The government is on the right track. And the protesters who brandish signs with slogans like "math not masturbation" need to be honest about what is more fun!

This movement and message of love and quality is gaining momentum. It is such a privilege to be part of rolling this stone and some days it feels like the path is all downhill. Today is happily one of those days.

Anne Creighton

Visit to St. Mildred's

Irene used to say, "If we can drive there and back in a day, we'll do it!"

With that spirit in mind, Anne Creighton and Silvana Ho headed to Oakville in February to visit St. Mildred's, an independent school for girls.

The students all had great questions and were pleased to see us there. In addition to our table at the "Health Carousel" we did a presentation to grade 11 and 12 girls.

Perhaps the most interesting part of our visit was the girls' enthusiasm for setting up a GSA. The girls were surprised to learn that the Education Act requires that high schools have them. They were even more surprised when their teacher jumped up and said she would be their teacher sponsor. As we were leaving the room, we left behind four grinning girls and a fantastic teacher eager to put their plan in motion.

Go St. Mildred's!



Proud to Play Night at the Raptors!

On February 4th, Toronto PFLAG once again teamed up with Egale, the Toronto Police Service and MLSE to hold Proud to Play Night at the Raptors.

Two of our supporters from Bank of Montreal, Gavin Clark and Murray Newman teamed up to purchase tickets for 35 teenagers from Rexdale Pride to see the game and attend the warm-up. These young LGBTQ kids from an economically disadvantaged part of the city loved being part of a big, proud gang. They made the game more enjoyable for all of us.

Special thanks to Constable Danielle Bottineau, Ty Smith from Egale and our own Michael Ain for working with Chad Ouellette from MLSE to organize this event.

Chad has already asked if we are TFC fans. And the Argos are interested in a Proud to Play game too. Anyone?



PFLAG supporters at Raptors game

New West End Support Meeting

We did it! Toronto PFLAG now has TWO support meetings each month: the original meeting on the first Wednesday at Coxwell continues and now a meeting on the second Tuesday is happening at St. Olave's Church on Windermere between Jane and Runnymede.

Our first meeting was in February. We figured at best we would have a few families and at worst we would have tea and some cookies and read a book....

We had families ☺. And they were both parents of kids who are transgender. So we had a great chat and we SHARED the cookies!

Our next west end meeting will be on March 10th, St. Olave's Church (side entrance), 360 Windermere Ave. at 7:30 pm.

York Mills Collegiate Institute

Toronto PFLAG was invited by Danielle Bottineau to participate in a forum at York Mills Collegiate Institute on February 17th. Danielle and Marla spoke to several teachers and administrators from the TDSB about our availability to speak to students, teachers and parents within schools.

We also sent teachers back with our posters for their schools and classrooms.

Canadian Safe Schools Network

Anne and Marla were invited to attend the Canadian Safe Schools Network Conference (CSSN) on February 24th. We were delighted to have the opportunity to meet with faculty and students attending schools from all parts of Ontario.

We took several orders for our popular posters that have already been shipped out.

"Matt Shepard is a Friend of Mine" returns to Toronto

The powerful documentary film "Matt Shepard is a Friend of Mine" premiered at the Inside Out Film Festival last year, and Toronto PFLAG was honoured to attend and to meet Matt's parents, Judy and Dennis. We had the pleasure of seeing them again at the theatrical release of the film in February, along with director Michele Josue and publicist Ryan Levy. Toronto PFLAG president Anne Creighton addressed the audience before one of the screenings, and underscored the importance of Matt's story being told.

The film is an incredibly powerful and tender re-telling of Matt Shepard's life, and the horrific, homophobic attack that so cruelly ended it. The film also speaks to Matt's legacy -- the advocacy, education and outreach provided by the Matthew Shepard Foundation. We encourage you to see the film and to learn more about the ongoing work of the foundation at www.matthewshepard.org.



Photo l to r: Ryan Levy, Anne Creighton, Michele Josue, Judy Shepard, Jill Holroyd, Dennis Shepard

Toronto Police College

On February 3rd, Toronto PFLAG was invited by Danielle Bottineau (LGBT cop on Facebook) to the Toronto Police College in Etobicoke to speak to the officers who regularly visit Elementary and Secondary schools in the Toronto District School Board.



 [PrideHouseTO](#)  [@PrideHouseTO](#) [#PrideHouseTO](#)

Join the PrideHouseTO Team!

PrideHouseTO has great plans for the TO2015 Pan Am Games including the PrideHouseTO Pavilion and a space of celebration in the Church Wellesley village featuring sports activations, concerts, beer gardens, art installations and games viewing.

PrideHouseTO is always looking for fabulous volunteers interested in sport and inclusion to fill a variety of roles ranging from planning and development to games event volunteers.

How do I become a volunteer?

The first step in becoming a volunteer with PrideHouseTO is to attend one of our Volunteer Meet 'N' Greet sessions. Prospective volunteers can sign up to attend by filling out a profile and applying to the opportunity on [Kindness.Connect](#), our volunteer management system. If you cannot attend a session in person, we will be offering one-on-one meetings as per mutual availability.

What kind of volunteer positions exist?

There are two types of volunteers working with the project, and much diversity among the types of responsibilities they all carry out.

Team Leads

- Team Lead Volunteers sit on an internal committee, known as either a Working Group or Logistic Team.
- Working Groups are responsible for the programming of all PrideHouseTO events during and leading up to the TO2015 Games. Logistic Teams develop the steps to support these initiatives.
- Volunteers are requested to attend a monthly two hour meeting leading up to TO2015.
- They may also be required to complete up to ten hours of work per month completing discrete project tasks and participating in regular phone/email communication.

Games-Time volunteers

- Games-Time Volunteers will be activated during the TO2015 Games.
 - We expect that we will require about 700 volunteers for our diverse projects in roles including our street team, pavilion greeters, bartenders, family/youth zone, and sports leaders, among many more.
 - Volunteers can apply to participate now, and select their shifts according to their interests in Spring 2015.
 - We are asking that each event-volunteer contributes by selecting 3 shifts over the scope of The Games (at around 4 hours each, depending on the role).
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What are the benefits of volunteering with PrideHouseTO?

- > A front row experience to PrideHouseTO events to enjoy the spirit of The Games.
- > A once in a lifetime opportunity to be part of a world-wide movement that makes a positive difference in how the LGBTQ community is included in sport.
- > An opportunity to increase your personal network by connecting with other volunteers who share similar passions for inclusion and community involvement, while meeting visitors from around the world.
- > A welcome to an encouraging and accessible community that will help develop personal and transferable work skills in leadership, communication, and teamwork.
- > An invitation to attend special events including the Café Series and a Volunteer Celebration event after The Games.
- > A volunteer uniform t-shirt, as well as access to recognition letters and PrideHouseTO swag.

www.pridehouseto.ca



a place for all in sport

THANK YOU

Toronto PFLAG wants to offer a heartfelt '**Thank You**' to the wonderful people who have recently made a donation to Toronto PFLAG. Your donations are allowing us to continue offering our 24/7 Telephone Support Line, our Monthly Support Meetings and our ongoing outreach and community support.

If you would like to help, you can make a donation through the secure servers at CanadaHelps.org (charitable donation receipts are issued automatically), and if you wish you can specify that your donation remain anonymous, or you can choose to honour someone or a special occasion.

Or you may send a cheque to

Toronto PFLAG, 200 Wolverleigh Blvd., Toronto, ON, M4C 1S2.
(charitable donation receipts will be issued for amounts of \$20+)

DONATE NOW

<http://www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?CharityID=s70090>

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