

PFLAG

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

**“combating homophobia”
workshop outcomes
Saturday, 12th June 2004**

**This workshop was funded by the: NSW Attorney General’s Office
Crime Prevention Division:
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and
Transgender Initiatives Program**

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Executive Summary

This document presents the outcomes of a combating homophobia workshop that was conducted on the 12th of June 2004 at the second Australian PFLAG conference. The workshop was funded by the NSW Attorney General's Office, Crime Prevention Division: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Initiatives Program.

Fifty-eight people took part in the workshop. Most participants were from NSW PFLAG groups. However representatives of the Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart groups were also present as well as PFLAG supporters from such organisations as the Metropolitan Community Church, New England Area Health Service and the Daughters of Charity.

The focus of the workshop essentially revolved around four key questions:

1. What is your experience of homophobia within your area?
2. What is your vision of a future without homophobia for GLBT people, their parents and friends in your area?
3. What are the significant issues that affect your ability to work as a PFLAG group and combat homophobia within your area?
4. How are you going to get there? What are the resources, strategies and partnerships that you need in place to achieve your vision?

Participants energetically embarked on the workshop tasks. They showed themselves to be passionate and dedicated to the challenge of combating homophobia at a local level. The result is a very ambitious plan of action for PFLAG and its' strategic partners to take at a local, State and even national level.

Experiences of homophobia

Participants reported a variety of manifestations of homophobia within their local communities:

- discrimination;
- verbal abuse;
- threats of violence;
- physical violence;
- institutional or a systemic lack of resourcing for GLBT people and sexuality issues; and
- the deliberate dissemination of misinformation for political or moral gain.

A vision for community life without homophobia

When participants were invited to vision a community life without homophobia they focussed on:

- positive shifts in the values and attitudes towards GLBT people amongst the general population;
- GLBT people and their families feeling free from shame and fear of discrimination;
- changes in the law and rights of GLBT people, particularly regarding the recognition of same sex relationships;
- the successful implementation of specific educational programs and safety resources within the structure of the general community; and
- some participants had a particular view of sexuality that they would like to be communicated.

The issues that hinder or enhance PFLAG's work

Participants were then invited to explore the issues that hinder or enhance the effectiveness of their work. Following is the list of issues that they report have a significant influence:

- the composition of PFLAG membership and personnel issues;
- identifying appropriate community, physical and financial resources;
- the environment within the broader community and service sector;
- partnerships and supportive relationships;
- the potential of the media, social marketing and publicity strategies;
- planning PFLAG's work and attending to the skills of members; and
- attending to the balancing between PFLAG's role a support agency and as a local change agent.

Forming plans of action...

Participants were then invited to discuss the resources, strategies and partnerships that are needed to address the particular issues that they feel passionate about. They chose to focus on the following nine issues:

1. Conservative politics and the attitudes of church;
2. Forming a unified voice for PFLAG;
3. Identifying funding sources and knowing how to generate submissions;
4. Balancing PFLAG's role as support agencies and as change agents;
5. Capitalising on people's strengths and abilities;
6. Forming effective partnerships;
7. Conducting a PFLAG social marketing / media campaign;
8. Having a lack of confidence, skills and fear in organising; and
9. Addressing homophobic attitudes within private schools

It is important to note that a number of themes clearly emerged during the conduct of the workshop. They present themselves in the plans of action that were devised by group members, and in the hopes that are expressed for a PFLAG that has a positive impact on levels of homophobia in society.

Partnerships

- Partnerships can assist PFLAG in attaining and augmenting the outcomes that it would like to achieve;
- Partnerships can help create a stronger support base for the PFLAG;
- Partnerships need to be nurtured amongst PFLAG groups as well as with external organisations.

In particular there was a lot of energy amongst participants to create a unified voice and coordinating body for PFLAG.

Funding

- “Funding is the fuel for PFLAG’s work”.
- There is a need to identify various sources of funding and make submissions to conduct specific projects or to improve resourcing for groups at a local level.

Our voice, our people and our experience are our strengths

- People are PFLAG’s primary resource and asset.
- Parents have a personally powerful voice in speaking out against discrimination and homophobia. However speaking out does not come naturally for everyone (It can be scary!).
- Confidence can be built up through training, experience and maintaining supportive relationships.

Support

- PFLAG is there to support parents and families. However it is important to realise that PFLAG groups also need to support each other.

The power of the media, publicity strategies and speaking out

- Utilising the media and speaking out at events and functions are important strategies for disseminating information about PFLAG and affecting values and attitudes about GLBT people.

Make the most of existing resources

- Share resources and let other PFLAG groups know what is available;
- Insist on quality, professional service from existing government, Police and health projects and resources.

1. Introduction

This report presents the outcomes of a half-day “combating homophobia” workshop that was conducted at the second Australian Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) conference on Saturday the 12th of June at the Rydges Hotel in Camperdown NSW.

PFLAG is a voluntary, peer-based support group whose main concern is offering support, information and referrals to families with gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender members. PFLAG membership primarily consists of parents whose children are gay or lesbian, and groups tend to operate at a local or regional level.

The workshop was funded by the NSW Attorney General’s Office, Crime Prevention Division: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Initiatives Program. It aimed to generate strategic responses to combat homophobia for PFLAG groups to action within rural and regional areas of NSW.

In all, fifty-eight people attended the workshop. There were representatives of the Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart PFLAG groups, as well as representatives from seven NSW PFLAG groups:

- Bathurst;
- Gunnedah;
- Mosman;
- Northern Rivers;
- Penrith;
- Port Macquarie; and
- Western Sydney.

Additionally PFLAG supporters participated in the workshop, coming from such organisations as the Metropolitan Community Church, the New England Area Health Service and the Daughters of Charity.

The focus of the workshop essentially revolved around four key questions:

1. What is your experience of homophobia within your area?
2. What is your vision of a future without homophobia for GLBT people, their parents and friends in your area?
3. What are the significant issues that affect your ability to work as a PFLAG group and combat homophobia within your area?
4. How are you going to get there? What are the resources, strategies and partnerships that you need in place to achieve your vision?

The conduct of the workshop followed a few basic principles to encourage the cross fertilisation of ideas and experience and to nurture the development of a broader community that learns and plans together:

- focus on future possibilities, not on past problems;
- participation is equal and open, regardless of hierarchy or position;
- all information is spoken out loud and recorded on paper for everyone to consider; and
- people self organise into groups of shared interest.

Participants energetically embarked on the workshop tasks despite already having had a substantial agenda to attend to. They showed themselves to be passionate and dedicated to the task of combating homophobia at a local level. The result is a very ambitious plan of action for PFLAG and its strategic partners to take at a local, State and even national level.

The consultant wishes PFLAG all the very best on their endeavours, and recommends that the PFLAG community regards this document as a first draft of a plan of action.

Here are some suggestions for approaching the content of this document:

Prioritise

Less is more! There is the potential for *a lot* of work to be generated by this document. Attending to one or two issues (and doing it well) may be better than attempting to address everything.

- Which issues stand out as being the most urgent to attend to in regards to the role and purpose of PFLAG?
- Are there issues that if attended to have the potential to create a big impact on how effectively PFLAG functions?
- Are there issues that if attended to promise to create a big impact on the outcomes that PFLAG would like to achieve?

Make a plan of action

- Identify the concrete steps for bringing PFLAG's vision into reality.
- Once again self-select into small groups and work on action plans that reflect member's excitement and commitment (other PFLAG members are only a letter, telephone call or e-mail away).
- Identify the factors that constrain and facilitate PFLAG achieving its goals.

Create support for implementing your plans

- Are there partnerships, resources and strategies that you can employ to help overcome the constraints and make the most of the strengths that you have identified?
- Establish a coordinating structure for implementing action plans.
- Take one step at a time. It can't all be done overnight. No more burnout please!

Good luck!

2. Experiences of homophobia at a local level.

The workshop commenced with a group focus on accounting for experiences of homophobia at a local level.

One participant commented that official statistics regarding the incidence of homophobic crimes and acts of discrimination within their area are inaccurate. Local GLBT people tend not to report such events for fear of further discrimination or of not being taken seriously by the agency with which they seek help from. However knowledge of local incidents are held within informal GLBT networks and within community agencies such as ACON (Port Macquarie)

Discrimination was the most common manifestation of homophobia that the group reported:

- Our local Newspaper will not include PFLAG advertisements (Penrith and Mosman).
- Approval was denied to display PFLAG pamphlets within council buildings (Penrith).
- Our attempts to donate gay and lesbian literature to school libraries has been resisted by the Catholic Schools education system. However the State schools have accepted our offer (Northern Rivers).
- A survey was conducted amongst Community Health Centres and Hospitals regarding GLBT friendly health services within the New England Area Health Service and only one hospital responded. The findings of this survey spurred on the development of a Sexual Diversity Policy within the New England Area Health Service (NEAHS).
- An invitation to talk about PFLAG at a Lion's Club dinner was withdrawn when the larger group found out about the content of the presentation (Melbourne).
- Bookstores generally don't carry GLBT literature within our area. There is only one bookstore that has a 'hidden' section out the back (Northern Rivers).
- The 'Students At Macquarie' group (university student body) refused to allocate space for the queer group within the new student union building. Academic staff refused to intervene in the issue (Mosman).
- Local parishioners commented that they would not allow a gay person to baby sit their children (Mosman).
- The Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson was quoted in an article in the Tamworth newspaper saying that the 'majority' view towards gay and lesbian people has to prevail (Tamworth).

Verbal abuse towards GLBT people was also commonly experienced:

- Local Koori gay guys receive a double assault of name calling (Moree).
- 'Gay', 'poof' and 'faggot' are used as a general term of a abuse, particularly within the schoolyard (Taree).
- I overheard the local Deputy Headmaster yelling at a schoolboy "Come here you little poofster!" (Mosman).
- A family acquaintance commented that he "hated those poofster bastards", despite knowing that I have a gay son (Brisbane).

The participant clarified the extent of the pain caused by this comment:

- What really hurt was that this was met by silence from my family members who were with me at the time (Brisbane).

Some verbal abuse was laden with the threat of violence:

- A gang of jeering schoolboys surrounded our queer group at school. The threat of bashing was so serious that the school arranged a regular lift for one the boy to travel to and from the train station (Campbelltown).

The group commented that the remedy for such situations is often to separate the 'victim' from the group rather than address homophobia and the threat of violence within the larger group (New England).

Two accounts of verbal abuse came with the experience of physical violence:

- A local gay man was verbally abused and a bike was thrown through the windscreen of his car (Tamworth).
- Homophobic neighbours hounded a lesbian couple out of their house after the women had been unintentionally outed on television (Tasmania).

Other reports of homophobia focussed on institutional or a systemic lack of resourcing for GLBT people and sexuality issues:

- The Department of Education and Training has only one person who can speak about their policy on homophobia (Western Sydney).
- Personal Development and Health Promotion classes regarding sexuality issues are not conducted or conducted inappropriately within our schools (Taree).

The deliberate dissemination of misinformation for political or moral gain was also reported:

- Our PFLAG meeting was infiltrated by members of a local church group who announced that homosexuality is reversible and that they would welcome any young GLBT people into their congregations for 'saving' (Port Macquarie).
- I heard on the radio that gays can be changed and this kind of misinformation is detrimental to the acceptance of gay people amongst the general public (Port Macquarie).
- The recent experience of deliberate wedge politics regarding the validity of same sex couples for marriage, and the crazy media response to lesbian mothers appearing on Play School (Northern Rivers).
- George Pell, Tony Abbott and the Archbishop of Armidale maintaining a public line that homosexuality is a 'choice' (Bathurst).

3. A vision for community life without homophobia.

The large group was then invited to create a vision of a world without homophobia. "If PFLAG was successful in combating homophobia at a local level, what would local community life be like for GLBT people, their parents and friends in 5 years' time?"

One participant called out, "PFLAG would become redundant!" The larger group enjoyed this exclamation and laughed.

Participant's responses tended to focus on a shift in the values and attitudes amongst the general population:

- Homosexuality is viewed as perfectly natural.
- GLBT people are treated as human beings first and foremost.
- Homophobic statements are shamed.
- There is a shift in the stereotypical gender imagery that we have in public, for example I could buy a "tom boy" doll and see more images of sports women.
- There is general acceptance and recognition of GLBT young people within schools.
- Gay and lesbian people are free and safe to wear what they want and show affection to each other in public.

The larger group applauded this last statement.

Some of the comments focussed on being free from shame and fear of discrimination:

- GLBT professionals are able to be out of the closet without risk of discrimination or adverse effects on their career.
- PFLAG groups are able to 'come out' and not have to be discrete about our meetings and membership.

Some participants had a particular view of sexuality that they would like to have been communicated:

- Sexuality is not used as a slur, but as a descriptive characteristic such as eye colour.
- The general community is informed about sexuality as a continuum. Sexuality is not viewed as fixed.
- The findings of research into the genetic cause of homosexuality are made public.
- Scientific research findings into sexuality are reported in the media.
- The church apologises for the hurt they have caused GLBT people.

A number of participants focussed on changes in rights and the law:

- GLBT couples can adopt children and have all of the parental rights and responsibilities that come along with that.
- In Tasmania the 'significant personal relationships' bill is translated into full equality and recognition of same sex relationships.
- Same sex relationships are legally recognised overseas as well as domestically.
- Marriage becomes an option for GLBT people in Australia.

One participant suggested that if the law had not changed for same sex couples regarding marriage that another term such as “union” can be claimed and presented as an option.

A number of participants focussed on the successful implementation of specific programs and resources within the general community:

- Issues regarding sexual diversity are a mandatory part of teacher, GP and Police training.
- An effective anti-homophobia package is sustained within schools.
- The Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers are systemically supported by the Police force and that personnel in the positions are evaluated for their effectiveness.
- A number of officers within the Department of Education and Training are responsible for the anti homophobia in schools program. The program is supported systemically rather than having to rely on one person. It is not just a headmaster’s choice to implement the program. The Department is driving its implementation and maintains accountability for it.

4. An exploration of the issues that enhance or detract from PFLAG working effectively in combating homophobia.

Following the visioning exercise, participants were asked to form smaller groups based the geographic focus of their PFLAG chapter. They were then invited to explore the issues that hinder or enhance the effectiveness of their work.

Participants reported the strong influence that the composition of PFLAG membership and personnel issues have on the effectiveness of groups:

- Having a strong leader and motivated committee helps.
- People burn out and get tired.
- Capitalising on people's strengths and abilities.
- How do you keep people in PFLAG?

Identifying appropriate community, physical and financial resources was also presented as influential on the effective work of PFLAG groups:

- Where do we find the resources to work with?
- There is generally a low level of resourcing within the support agencies that we rely on.
- Having a paid coordinator would make a big difference.
- Identifying funding sources and knowing how to generate submissions.

Participants commented on the influence of the broader community and service environment:

- A poor level of Police and Health Department recording of homophobia and discrimination issues.
- Homophobia amongst GPs - some won't display our pamphlets.
- There is a resistance to training in sexuality issues amongst some professionals for fear of discrimination and a lack of funding to pay for their training.
- Lack of appropriate teacher training.
- Attitudes within private schools.
- Conservative politics and the views of the church getting in the way.
- The fear of being 'outed' ourselves, and experiencing discrimination towards PFLAG members. Coming out as a parent can sometimes be detrimental to your child.
- PFLAG is viewed a non-professional / non-valid support agency in my area.

Forming partnerships and nurturing supportive relationships was also discussed by participants:

- We need to form more and better partnerships
- We need to work together more, across groups, not just within groups.
- There is a lack of a state structure for PFLAG.
- Forming a PFLAG 'federation' to have a unified voice.

Some participants commented on the potential of utilising social marketing and publicity strategies:

- We have not shown persistence in going to the media and to local politicians.
- We need a PFLAG social marketing / media campaign.

Some participants presented planning the work of PFLAG and attending to the skills of members as important issues that need addressing:

- There is a general lack of planning and direction setting.
- Lack of confidence and fear in organising / lack of skills to do the job.
- How will we find the time to do all of this work?

One participated commented on the precarious balancing act that PFLAG has to manage, attending to its role as a support agency and as a local change agent.

5. Forming plans of action...

Participants were then invited to self organise into groups of similar interest to discuss the resources, strategies and partnerships that are needed to address the particular issue that they feel passionate about. They were also invited to make recommendations to the broader Australian PFLAG community if their discussions were progressed enough.

Workshop participants chose to focus on the following issues:

- Conservative politics and the attitudes of church getting in the way of PFLAG's work;
- Forming a unified voice for PFLAG;
- Identifying funding sources and knowing how to generate submissions;
- Balancing our role as support agencies and as change agents;
- Capitalising on people's strengths and abilities;
- Forming effective partnerships;
- Conducting a PFLAG social marketing / media campaign;
- Having a lack of confidence and fear in organising / lack of skills to do the job; and
- Addressing homophobic attitudes within private schools

5.1 Conservative politics and the attitudes of church getting in the way of PFLAG's work

Let's develop a statement that can be used by all denominations, a brief affirmation that we can say at meetings as a "prayer" to a higher being to seek assistance with solving insurmountable problems.

In particular we would like to change the view that all gays are paedophiles. Parents and family members need to get the message across that GLBT people are normal community members regardless of lifestyle or sexual orientation.

Parents can get together to compose a letter to politicians to explain our situation and try to destroy these pre-conceived ideas. We can state that our children have been or are upstanding members of the community and contribute to the wider community. We need to point out that politician's views may be their own but not necessarily the electorate's view.

- We need to utilise people with influence to attempt to change conservative attitudes in the church and in politics; and
- join with like minded agencies and form partnerships to act as a lobby group to church and government

This will be more powerful than just having a single PFLAG group speaking out.

5.2 Forming a unified voice for PFLAG

To be taken seriously and have political clout we need to have a unified voice. A 'federation'?

In order to do this we need good will from / amongst all PFLAG groups. We could canvas all groups to get feedback. This could be done by e-mail or by a questionnaire.

We will need to have a majority agreement and a willingness from people to put in additional effort - to look outside of the square of the existing work of PFLAG members.

As an organisational structure we suggest:

- an election of office bearers from each State and Territory that has a PFLAG group;
- the creation of an office that will have the ultimate responsibility to coordinate and send out national press releases etc; and
- the term of office would be for no longer than two years to avoid burn out; and
- it should rotate amongst regions.

The national committee will hold regular telephone and/or e-mail meetings and:

- form PFLAG policies at a national level;
- improve communication between groups;
- give guidance and advice for finding resources to struggling groups;
- suggest ideas for projects for groups to conduct; and
- be a uniting body to fight battles in each state.

Ideally we could have a central office and seek resourcing from other GLBT groups.

However we need to take small steps in working towards this. One step at a time!

5.3 Identifying funding sources and knowing how to generate submissions

Money is the fuel to run PFLAG programs. To mobilise and get the most bangs for the buck we need to:

- allocate a PFLAG member to seek sources of funds from local councils, neighbourhood centres, non-government organisations, government organisations and private enterprise.

PFLAG groups also need to decide what we will do with the money.

In the longer term we would like to:

- fund a part-time or full-time State Secretariat as a resource for PFLAG groups to find money, assist with writing submissions and generate publicity.

There are many buckets of money that we need to explore and tap into to fund the Secretariat:

- The Health Department;
- The Department of Education and Training;
- The Attorney General's Department

We could also:

- lobby Members of Parliament; and
- GLBT professionals.

5.4 Balancing our role as support agencies and as change agents

Time is an important factor in achieving all that we want to do and serving the groups that we run. Providing support to other parents and each other is a priority.

- Is it best to provide support within the group, on an individual basis or going in pairs to meet the new person?

Working as change agents is something that we do when we have the energy to take on an issue and see a specific need to address. Additionally we tend to take an issue on when we have the confidence to address it publicly, for example hospitals and PFLAG.

The problem is that one confident person generally takes on tasks and then has to delegate or share the workload. People are happy to be 'Indians' but not 'Chiefs'.

Strategies that we can employ as change agents:

- Be willing to speak publicly to groups and the media – radio, papers, TV;
- Initiate public appearances and get information into the public arena;
- Write articles for church groups newsletters, student magazines, gay magazines and responding to opportunities that arise; and
- Find ways to challenge right wing groups e.g. churches, public figures and their comments.

Partnerships:

- We need a formal network of PFLAG groups;
- Health services;
- GLBT community groups;
- FPA Health;
- Local Universities;
- Schools - especially P&C associations, health nurses and school counsellors; and
- Churches – to challenge their beliefs about 'caring' for families.

Recommendations:

- Dare to contact everyone as above!
- Develop parent's skills to tell our stories;
- Conduct public information nights;
- Train parents to further develop our listening skills (so that we can support other parents better);
- Brainstorm strategies to challenge homophobia; and
- We need information and facts to counter the 'statistics' that church groups etc. quote us.

5.5 Capitalising on people's strengths and abilities

Resources – Our people are our biggest and best resource.

- Recognise individual member's expertise;
- Learn where and how to make appropriate referrals;
- Have a safe meeting place; and
- Identify education resources.

Strategies

- Find pathways and make linkages to other groups;
- Hold more meetings/conferences on a local, State and even national level;
- Share the resources that we already have with other groups; and
- Network more with other PFLAG groups.

Partnerships

- GLBT groups
- local Councils
- Sexual Health Clinics;
- ACON;
- Reconnect;
- Affirming churches

Recommendations

- Become more visible regionally and nationwide; and
- Seek sponsorship to assist us with different projects.

5.6 Forming effective partnerships

One of the most important partnerships that we need to nurture is amongst our own groups. Let's create an 'umbrella' PFLAG group that is made up of one representative from each state. Membership will be made up of representatives who take on a two-year rotating roster.

We need:

- Knowledge resources;
- IT resources;
- To identify, pool and disseminate existing resources / contacts; and
- To prioritise the key groups that we need to nurture partnerships with.

Strategies – to create a PFLAG umbrella group:

- Clarify member's tasks / create a job description.
- Identify the needs that the group could address;
- Identify potential funding sources; and
- Identify local and regional resources.

Strategies – to identify knowledge and IT resources:

See what's on offer at:

- The Department of Health;
- ACON;
- GLBT groups;
- Universities;
- GLLOs; and
- Existing internet resources

Create an inventory of existing resources and contacts at a local level and share that information with other groups via the umbrella group.

Recommendations:

- Clarify the tasks and role of the umbrella group;
- Create a 5 year plan; and
- Prioritise the key groups for partnerships and resources available at a local level.

5.7 Conducting a PFLAG social marketing / media campaign

Conduct a PFLAG social marketing / media campaign that aims to:

- Inform the general community about PFLAG groups;
- Dispel myths about GLBT people;
- Fight homophobia by nurturing acceptance for GLBT people and their families – like the environment, drink driving or safe motoring advertisements “this could be your neighbour, your brother or son...” Show the general community that GLBT people have family lives too, they are loved, and are loving members of the community.

The advertisements could be on television, in magazines, on the back of toilet doors. We could also increase publicity for PFLAG by getting on shows like “Australian Story”

To do this we need to seek sponsorship or funding from:

- GLBT groups;
- ACON;
- The Health Department;
- The Attorney General's Department;
- wealthy GLBT professionals.

We could also try to get a high profile PFLAG “patron”. This person doesn’t necessarily have to be GLBT or a parent, but be supportive and willing to represent us and speak out and be a voice for us when needed. They could also assist with fundraising.

5.8 Having a lack of confidence and fear in organising / lack of skills to do the job

Resources:

- People’s experience is an important resource - telling our story from the heart;
- use organisations such as FPA Health to offer training in leading discussion groups, conducting meetings and organising committees; and
- PFLAG groups sharing what we do and how we do it.

Strategies:

- Contact people who have hands on experience and listen what they have to say;
- Write submissions to organisations such as FPA Health to provide support for meetings; and
- Get assistance and advice on ‘how to form a committee’ from other PFLAG groups.

Partnerships:

- with PFLAG members;
- the local Area Health Service;
- HIV/AIDS education / support groups;
- Community Health Centres;
- NALAG – National Association of Loss and Grief.

Recommendations

Although PFLAG is a voluntary organisation we need training in:

- running meetings;
- organising PR into local communities;
- discussion group leading;
- building confidence; and
- planning for future directions.

Let’s seek professional training from FPA Health and other organisations.

5.9 Addressing homophobic attitudes within private schools

- We can’t do it all on our own. Network with other groups e.g. public interest advocacy groups who are working on a bill of human rights;
- Contact school counsellors – they have a responsibility to refer on if they are unable to help;
- Lobby to get schools policies and legislation changed;

- Make sure the local area around the private school has resources to support gay children e.g. youth groups, gay positive council plans, articles in the local paper. Encourage local businesses to support 'safe place' programs;
- Ensure that comprehensive information is available about PFLAG on web pages and that it can be accessed by students, school counsellors and other parents;
- Encourage and support ex-students who are GLBT to attend school functions – have visibility;
- Encourage critical thinking on all issues within the school community, and comment when they are not thinking critically;
- Comment on / show gratitude for gay community contributions to society in local papers etc;
- Get community leaders to support initiatives by opening PFLAG groups, youth groups etc;
- Mentoring;
- Ensure that PFLAG contact details are accessible in telephone lists - under "gay" and under "P" for PFLAG.