

Welcome to the SSAFE in Schools Newsletter Number 6

Welcome back to term four! Hope you had a restful holiday and you are geared up for the final term of school.

Here at SSAFE things have changed a bit. Firstly the good news is the project has been extended until the end of the year in a part time capacity, so we can continue to respond to the requests and enquiries around working with same sex attracted and gender non- conforming young people. As the SSAFE network now includes over 170 members from schools and agencies across the state (and the country for that matter) the requests keep coming! Sadly, Ian Seal is now no longer with us here at Family Planning Victoria. Liz Alexander continues as the project worker here in a part time capacity and she is available at the Action Centre on 9660 4704.

This latest newsletter fills you in on the release of several **resources** for teachers, students, schools, and parents. It also lists several of the **projects and programs** that run around Melbourne to support same sex attracted and transgender youth.

Email SSAFE for backdated newsletters that documents what this and other projects are doing around Melbourne, along with describing what schools are doing throughout the state to address sexual diversity.

What we've been doing:

We have been continuing to provide professional development and secondary consultations to schools and community agencies as well as those training to be youth workers and teachers. We are linking in with other projects and workers that work with same sex attracted young people to ensure this work is sustainable beyond the SSAFE project. For more information on this call Liz Alexander on 9660 4704.

The major task we have been keeping busy with at SSAFE over the last few months is the completion of all the resources (including a website) that were launched in September. The launch was a great success with over 60 people attending and going away with bags full of resources! This was also an opportunity to say farewell to Ian and congratulate him on all his hard work with FPV over the last ten years. The resources are described briefly below and order forms are attached to this email. There has already been a great response to these resources which aim to help

fill the gap in terms of resources that help you to create safe and inclusive environments for same sex attracted young people. We are keen to see these resources get distributed far and wide so feel free to circulate these details and order forms among your networks.

WEBSITE: www.ssafeschools.org.au: this is a resource that is designed primarily for teachers but could certainly be useful to a whole range of others who work with young people. It contains a range of info including the research, what structures, frameworks and policies are in place to support ssa students, resources available to use in classrooms that are inclusive of sexual diversity, SSAFE newsletters, transgender young people, frequently asked questions, referral points and other school based programs etc

RESOURCE: Same Sex Attracted Friendly Environments (SSAFE) in Schools: a Whole School Resource: this is a ring binder folder containing 4 booklets: -the research evidence: documents the experiences of ssa students and other members of school communities -Policy, legislation and Frameworks: those that support, legitimate and obligate schools to address the needs of ssa students -Processes and strategies: for implementing whole school approaches to addressing homophobia - School Based Practice: the words from several schools who presented at the 'Class Act' conference about what they are doing in their schools to address homophobia, modeling a range of practices and strategies.

BOOKLET: Creating Safe Schools: this small booklet addresses the role and importance of the partnership between parents and schools in supporting sexual diversity. It is designed to legitimate the work that some schools are doing in this area, answer parents questions and ease their concerns.

STUDENT AUDIT: Sexuality and homophobia student audit which is designed for students to reveal how well their school is doing to support sexual diversity. Designed to compliment the Australian Research Centre in Sex Health & Society audit for teachers.

BOOKLET: Making Sense: Information for parents, friends and family of gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender young people. 40 page A5 sized booklet for parents of queer children aimed at answering questions, breaking down myths and stereotypes and giving referral and support information.

PARENT WORKSHOP MANUAL: Out in the Family: this is a manual for facilitators working with parents of ssa and gender non conforming young people. This package is designed to facilitate peer support amongst parents of glbt young people and to provide info to those parents about issues for glbt young people. The pack includes notes on program delivery, session outlines, worksheets and posters. It is designed to be used by those who are familiar with the subject matter and/or have worked with ssa youth, and would be most useful when run as an adjunct to an existing support programs for queer youth, targeting the parents of those young people participating in the program.

Did you know about...?

Fresh

Fresh is a social group for **young people with HIV**. Fresh provides regular activities including retreats, art competitions, newsletters and much more. Fresh is an informal group which focuses on getting together and hanging out with other young people. For more information call Fresh 9863 0419 or e-mail fresh@vic aids.asn.au

KALEIDOSCOPE

Kaleidoscope is a same sex attracted project on the **Mornington Peninsula** which is auspiced by Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service. It has been operating for two and a half years now by offering practical support, professional development and classroom teaching to schools that want to make positive changes for their same sex attracted students and those students whose parents are gay or lesbian. There are a number of secondary schools on the Mornington Peninsula that are embracing sexual diversity education in various ways. To contact Kaleidoscope, ring Viv Ray on 0408 483 980 or email kaleidoscope@infoxchange.net.au

Pride & Diversity:

The Pride & Diversity Project is a three year initiative that is funded by the Commonwealth Government. It is an innovative project that provides a complete service to gay, lesbian, bisexual young people and those questioning their sexuality in the **City of Monash**. The project covers these areas:

Outreach support and counselling
Through:

- A social/support group for 14 – 21 year olds who identify as gay, lesbian, bi or unsure
- Individual support
- Knowledge and referral to other support services
- Coordination and collaboration amongst support services to improve access opportunities for same sex attracted young people

Educational package

The package will include information and resources, including:

- professional development for school staff and health professionals
- materials and resources for parents
- program for students
- a holistic approach to schools and community health agencies

If you are interested in being part of the group, finding out more or would like brochures/fliers please call or email Shlom Eshel on 9561 7359 or 0402 208 070, shlome@monash.vic.gov.au

Whittlesea group:

We are the **Whittlesea** SSTAYP group, and informal social and supportive group, for young people who go to school or live in the Whittlesea region, who identify as same sex attracted or who are questioning their sexuality. We will meet on a fortnightly basis in Epping. The group will be a discussion group, with social activities and information sharing. My contact details are: Vassi: 9716-9444, or 0423 208 951.

U - unstraight/unsure?

U is a support based group for young people aged 16-20 years who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or who are questioning their sexuality. The group meets monthly in the **Lilydale** area. To find out how you can get involved, please contact Jodie at the Shire of Yarra Ranges - Youth Services on 9294 6716 or 0418 389 196. Or you can email her at: j.doyle@yarraranges.vic.gov.au.

Diversity

This is a support group for same-sex attracted young people in the **Goulburn Valley**. This program is an open, friendly and welcoming environment for young people to explore sexuality issues, get information, discuss concerns and talk with others about similar life experiences. Diversity is supervised by professional adult leaders and

offers safety and confidentiality. Contact Rowena Allan @ Cutting Edge Youth Services on (03) 5831 6157

Y-GLAM Performing Arts Project

Y-GLAM Performing Arts Project is a community arts program for same sex attracted and transgender young people aged 14 to 25. The group meets weekly in Brunswick to learn theatre-making skills and create performances. Y-GLAM is currently funded by Australia Council Community Cultural Development Board and VicHealth. For more information call Jemma, Vicky or Chris on 9355 9900.

Safe and Sound

Safe and Sound is a community development project for same sex attracted and transgender young people in **Brimbank**. The project consists of Generation Q, a weekly social support group, working collaboratively with six local secondary schools to create safe and supportive learning environments and annual community forums and community education initiatives. The project is funded by the William Buckland, Myer and Reichstein Foundations. For more information call Jemma on 9364 3200.

“WayOut” Central Victorian Youth & Sexual Diversity Project

WayOut is a project funded by the Department of Human Services with the principal aim of reducing the isolation and discrimination that same-sex attracted young people may face in the region. It offers a range of services to schools in the Macedon Ranges, Mt Alexander, Central Goldfields and Bendigo Shires including:

- Information sessions for School Councils
- Support and advice on the development and implementation of relevant policies and curriculum initiatives
- Provision of staff development
- Provision of information to class groups
- Support to student councils/groups wanting to promote diversity.

The project also has brokerage funds that schools can apply to for financial assistance to undertake initiatives that promote a welcoming and safe school environment for same sex attracted students.

For further information contact:

Sue Hackney

"WayOut", Central Victoria Youth & Sexual Diversity Project

Cobaw Community Health Service

tel. 5421 1619

mobile: 0428 347 407

shackney@cobaw.vic.gov.au

Young & Gay

Young & Gay is a free and confidential six week discussion-based group for guys aged 26 and under. Each session starts at 7:00 pm and finishes at approximately 10:30 pm. Each group has up to 12 participants. They tend to be from a variety of backgrounds and at various stages of identifying that they are attracted to other guys. Trained facilitators lead the groups. Groups are generally held on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday nights at the VAC 6 Claremont St South Yarra. For more information ring Asvin 9865-6700.

These programs and services, along with many more that run throughout Victoria are part of the Rainbow Network. You can receive updated details about these services by filling in the form below.

Rainbow Network

Would your organisation like a list of the social and support groups for same sex attracted and transgender young people in Victoria?

The Rainbow Network is a statewide network for workers facilitating social and support groups for same sex attracted and transgender young people (SSATY). The network is a voluntary initiative that meets monthly and provides a space for information sharing, support and joint activities.

There are now almost thirty groups across Victoria, being facilitated by a broad range of organisations and Local Government Youth Services. New programs are also being developed in a number of Municipalities. The Rainbow Network updates a comprehensive list of the programs on a monthly basis. It is designed to provide organisations with information about local services and referral points. If you would like to receive this list via email please fill out the form below.

Thanks for your support.

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

_____ **Postcode** _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Please return this form to:

Jemma Mead

Good Shepherd Youth & Family Service

354 Main Road West

ST ALBANS 3021

Phone: 9364 3200

Fax: 9364 3733

Email: gsjemmam@infoxchange.net.au