



One day, society will accept all its members as equals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Until that day, there is PFLAG.

METRO DC PFLAG's MISSION

Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) promotes the equality and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons, their families and friends through:

- **Support** to cope with an adverse society
- **Education** to enlighten an ill-informed public
- **Advocacy** to end discrimination and secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity. Keeping families together is the mission of PFLAG. Our family values stress education, understanding, acceptance, and support, but most of all love, thereby empowering our children — straight & gay — to lead happy and productive lives.

We are:

- parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers, children, spouses, and friends of gay persons
- straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered persons

And we are:

- a non-profit, tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) corporation
- not affiliated with any ethnic, religious, economic, or political group
- a volunteer, local, community-based group
- a membership organization open to anyone and everyone who supports our mission

And we are also:

- more than 25 years old, with over 1000 members and supporters
- a chapter of the national Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays organization (over 200,000 members and supporters in almost 500 communities across the United States and abroad)



CONFIDENTIALITY IS MAINTAINED

METRO DC PFLAG PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Helpline: A confidential Helpline is available for persons who need information and support. **Helpline number:** (301) 439-FLAG (3524). Trained peer counselors work with parents and family members as they come to terms with an LGBT family member.

Support Groups: Everyone is welcome. Our support groups are led by trained facilitators. Confidentiality is maintained. Our goal is to help families heal and stay together. Sixteen different support groups meet at various locations in the Metropolitan DC area. For additional information about any Support Group, call (301) 439-FLAG (3524) or (202) 638-3852.

The Speakers' Bureau: Our volunteer speakers are available to address business and government employees, students of all ages, and community service groups who are interested in becoming more aware of equality, coming out, and acceptance issues related to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) people.

Parents, family members, and friends, and sometimes GLBT people present basic facts, and share their personal stories. When we "put a face" on the issue, it becomes less threatening. Experience has taught us that in the overwhelming majority of instances, we can actually moderate stereotyping.

Metro DC PFLAG members can participate in panel discussions with other guests (arranged by PFLAG or the host organization), or speak individually. Diversity days, staff meetings, community roundtables, workshops, classes, breakfast, lunch, and dinner meetings, and school assemblies are all great venues for our speakers.

Public Education: Metro DC PFLAG provides valuable information to parents, family members, and friends of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered (GLBT) people. We help them better understand sexual orientation and gender issues. We offer a chance for people to become advocates who can help us create a more accepting community for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people.

We offer a variety of print resources ranging from "Is Homosexuality a Sin" to "Answers to Parents' Questions". In addition we maintain a website that contains information on a variety of topics and produce a newsletter.

If you are part of a corporation, government office, or civic organization, we can offer you speakers for workshops or other employee/member training, pamphlets for employees or members, and support groups for employees or members who are having difficulty with coming out issues, either as parents or family members or as gay, lesbian bisexual or transgendered people. We also have a special business membership, which we would like you to consider.



Safe Schools: One of Metro DC PFLAG's primary goals is to help create a safe learning environment for all students in the schools of the District of Columbia and the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. We believe that everyone, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youth, has the right to attend school free of fear. For many gay and lesbian teens, schools are not a safe place. Met with verbal abuse that is often ignored – in some cases encouraged – by teachers and administrators, gay teens face an environment so hostile some of them find their ability to function as students crippled. Going to school can be unbearable. The failure of federal, state, and local governments to enact laws to protect gay youth from harassment has contributed to what amounts to a green light for fellow students to tease, taunt and some cases physically abuse their peers. The statistics are staggering: eighty percent of gay and lesbian youth are victims of verbal abuse and two-thirds have been threatened with or injured by a weapon. Gay teens are up to six times more likely to attempt suicide. Thirty percent of them succeed.

But something can be done. And Metro DC PFLAG is doing it.

Metro DC PFLAG has been a very active participant in discussions and litigation regarding the depiction of homosexuality in school health curriculums and has advocated strongly for the inclusion of factual information that will benefit lgbt students as well as all students.