



International
Family
Equality
Day

2019

FAMILIES: UNITED WE STAND

IFED 2019, Brazil





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Editorial

This year in May IFED has celebrated its first anniversary as an NGO. Board members and supporters have gathered in the first General Assembly in Wellington (New Zealand) during the ILGA World Conference. An occasion for the activists involved to meet, exchange experiences, learn from and support each other's.

With IFED's support and coordination, the International Family Equality Day has been celebrated on the first Sunday of May 2019 in 117 towns and 50 countries worldwide.

Throughout the year, IFED has networked and advocated for equality for all families in important LGBTQ* global events.

During the annual ILGA World Conference in March IFED has organized a Workshop about «Intersectional Justice for Global Rainbow Families», spotlighting the daily life experiences from rainbow families from Tonga, Pakistan, Fiji, South Africa and Malaysia.

In June at the Human Rights Conference of the World Pride NYC, IFED had the opportunity to organize the Panel "An international day to diversity and recognition of all families" where participants have learnt about International Family Equality Day's great political and social impact.

In September IFED attended a side event on the 42nd session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. We were honored to intervene and present the International Family Equality Day in a panel held by UN Women for the launch of their report on Family in a changing world.

With the friendly support from the NGO Family Equality (USA) IFED has then participated with many rainbow families from different countries at the WorldPride NYC 2019 commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising.

IFED continues to grow and work to increase its support to rainbow families and their organizations around the world to build together a sustainable worldwide network. A network of people and families united to celebrate the beauty of diversity and to promote equality for all.



Images left: at the Ilga World IFED Workshop, at the Stonewall Human Rights Conference in NYC, at the panel discussion «From Ukraine to the world, exploring the contexts of rights in which we freely build and live our sexualities, families and parenthoods» during the European Lesbian* Conference in Kyiv.



Foreword

by Victor Madrigal-Borloz, UN SOGI Independent Expert

Dear friends of the IFED,

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, now in its 70th year of force, describes the family as “the natural and fundamental group unit of society,” and as I highlighted in my latest report to the United Nations General Assembly, on social inclusion of LGBT persons, the legal recognition and protection of the families of LGBT persons is a human rights issue within this framework.

Vast numbers of LGBT persons still live in jurisdiction that criminalise same-sex relations around the world. We must not forget the impact in the lack of legal recognition and protection of their families. Even when this is not the case, LGBT persons who live, love and seek happiness within the boundaries of the law and their own conceptualisation of this “natural and fundamental group unit of society,” are subject to a disparaging amount of backlash directed against themselves and even their children, with damaging trickledown effects which impact their inclusion in a broad range of sectors, including education, housing, health care, employment, and political participation.

It is therefore paramount that States, led and informed by the voices of LGBT persons themselves, work to facilitate the full socio-legal inclusion and protection of the rights of rainbow and gender diverse families in both the public and private spheres. While much progress has been made in recent years to validate the great diversity of identities, far too many families, parents, and children are penalized for bringing their authentic selves to their schools, workplaces, houses of worship, housing, and public facilities each and every day.

In August 2019, together with the United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, I released a statement on World Youth Day declaring that housing must also be viewed as an important issue within the LGBT rights movement. Yet through my research I have concluded that LGBT persons are disproportionately discriminated against around the world throughout the housing and rental process. Families of LGBT persons are routinely subject to forced evictions, and they have their housing applications denied merely as a result of landlord’s disapproval of their sexual orientation, gender identity,

or relationship status. Housing discrimination is further compounded by the alarmingly high rates of homelessness in the LGBT community, especially amongst LGBT youth who often are shunned by their own families.

For LGBT elders, the issue of housing insecurity in retirement, and lack of recognition and protection of their families when entering aged care, has only just begun to enter public discourse – with some local municipal governments now taking action to establish LGBT elder specific housing units in order to address rising disparities in housing access and health care.

Academic intuitions also play a vital role in reaffirming the validity of LGBT families and their children. For young and impressionable students, discrimination perpetuated by schools against their own LGBT classmates or their parents can leave a lasting perception that such forms of discrimination are not only acceptable, should also be imitated. This delegitimation of families of LGBT persons by school systems can therefore inspire a lifetime of prejudice. In my latest report on social inclusion, I found that LGBT pupils and the children of LGBT parents face a wide range of abuse in educational settings including teasing, name-calling, intimidation, physical violence, social isolation, cyberbullying, physical and sexual assault, and even death threats. Often these acts of bullying and harassment are met with little to no contestation by teachers and school administrators, many of whom are either un-trained, ill-equipped, or simply un-motivated to make such interventions. A zero-tolerance policy prohibiting all forms of homo and trans-phobic bullying must be adopted by school administrators in order to ensure that the security of LGBT youth and the children of families of LGBT persons is maintained during their most formative of years.

Finally, the workplace presents an equally important frontier for the full economic and social inclusion of the families of LGBT persons. As many States debate the expansion of their paid family leave programs, they must too be included in such conversations. All families conceiving children or undergoing the adoption process should be given ample time and compensation to form the necessary social bonds with their children to ensure a warm and healthy family life.

As you, and many others around the world, re-focus and re-fresh your energies ahead of a new year of advocacy work, I wish to once again underscore the



essential perspective added, and role played, by IFED families in the global conversation and fight for equality. I wish to thank you all again for the hard work each and every one of you is putting into this work for the eradication of violence and discrimination.

In my work as the United Nations' independent expert on preventing violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, I am humbled to listen and work alongside you all. In the words of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, all people and families are born free and with "an existence worthy of human dignity." Let us continue to work to make these words a reality.

Victor Madrigal-Borloz

Mr. Victor Madrigal-Borloz is the United Nations Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, a position he has held since January 2018. He is currently the Eleanor Roosevelt Fellow and a Senior Visiting Researcher at the Human Rights Program of Harvard University Faculty of Law. His latest report to the United Nations General Assembly focusses on socio-cultural and economic inclusion as an element in the eradication of violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.





IFED 2019 Australia

Foreword

by Valerie Woods, former Senator, Belize

The journey to eradicate discrimination, violence and stigma based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender diversity is a very long and difficult one. However, progress has been made in many countries around the world and this has to be celebrated and recognized. Success is not a destination but it is that journey of so many steps and each incremental step must be celebrated and acknowledged.

In my own country, in this past month the LGBT community recently concluded Belize PRIDE week on August 10th. This year it marked the 3rd anniversary date of the landmark ruling by the Belize supreme court that same sex between consenting adults should not be criminalized and that it was unconstitutional for it to have been. This ruling of the court was not appealed. That was a good day for human rights in Belize and around the world and a victory that was so long overdue for so many LGBT citizens in Belize.

While this was a monumental achievement for Belize, the Caribbean region and the world, stigma and discrimination still exist. Advocating for human rights means that we support basic human rights of all persons regardless of gender or sexual orientation. It also means recognizing and acknowledging that Rainbow families exist and their rights and their children's rights matter.

The rising chorus that human rights are for all of us and not just for some of us gets louder and bigger each year due to the tremendous work and support of many individuals, organizations, programs and outreach around the world. The sharing of these human stories of families and individuals are significant.

“we are either moving together as humans in Belize or we are not moving together any at all”

The actions of so many individuals, organizations and countries around the world are making the voices heard and the visibility seen of rainbow families. Many have given the ultimate sacrifice. In their honour, we cannot and must not give up. This publication is an important part of these efforts to showcase the humanness and the human stories of rainbow families. This is critically

significant as it demonstrates that rainbow families and diversity of families are global and in every region of the world, are productive members of society and should not be ignored. Social inclusion is imperative to the successful development of any community or country. The International Family Equality Day (IFED) annual report highlights the efforts in awareness and activities around the world contributing to ending discrimination, promoting equal rights and shining a light on the initiatives of many who advocate for the human rights of all persons.

Parliamentarians and leaders have a critical role to play in advancing these human rights and an obligation to bring meaningful change. Parliamentarians must always be reminded that LGBT persons and rainbow families are also their constituents and citizens of their countries. Their stories need to

be heard. There are many parliamentary allies around the world who visibly and strongly support this call and I salute them for their bold efforts in making a difference and providing safe spaces for dialogue and collaboration.

We must embrace each other first and foremost as humans. As it has been stated and reaffirmed countless times, we are all equal in human rights and dignity. I reiterate the statement by Belize's own Derricia Castillo, one of the founding members of OUR CIRCLE non-government organization, "we are either moving together as humans in Belize or we are not moving together any at all".



Foreword

by COFACE Families Europe

Families are just like flowers. Each one unique and beautiful – but with similar needs. Unfortunately some family forms still experience discrimination, rejection and exclusion by law or through societal behaviours. Therefore it is crucial to keep speaking out and supporting all kinds of families. The International Family Equality Day is a great opportunity to do exactly that and COFACE Families Europe is happy to be part of it.

As network, we experience daily the added value of pluralism in our network. We perceive it as our strength. Our member organisations are all different but with one thing in common: families. No matter which constellation a family has, the needs and wishes stay the same: they need access to sufficient financial resources, available quality services and adequate time arrangements in order to live and enjoy their family life in dignity. This is the way COFACE Families Europe has for more than 60 years promoted the well-being and

health of all types of families and their members in a changing society. We work towards a family-friendly environment, which enables the wide diversity of families to thrive.

We do that through our advocacy and awareness raising at European as well as national and local level through our members. We keep the pluralistic and diversity lens alive by constantly emphasizing the different family patterns and growing complexity of family ties, which have evolved and coexist in our societies, in legislation and discussions all over Europe. The recently adopted EU work-life balance directive, which we defended for two long years using a family diversity lens, contains the notion of equivalent second parent which is a milestone for all kinds of families and particularly rainbow families.

Our fight continues as the common heteronormative family pattern of father – mother – child has long been joined by a variety of family forms and it is about time that all kinds of arrangements enjoy equal rights. Empowering all types of families and campaign for the respect and implementation of fundamental rights and a better society for all European families is our main priority which guides our work and the work of our members.

The International Family Equality Day is a unique and important awareness raising day which fits perfectly our mission and values. We stand with all the defenders of families in all their diversity and we want to express our resistance to homophobic and fundamentalist ideologies and views.



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COFACE Families Europe is a pluralistic network of civil society associations representing the interests of all families. COFACE was born in 1958 following the creation of the European Economic Community. Now with 58 member organisations in 23 Member States of the EU, it represents more than 25 million families in Europe.



AUSTRALIA

Over 700 people celebrated IFED at our Family Pride! picnic in Sydney Park.

Families enjoyed entertainment from children's entertainer Justine Clarke, local band Larger than Lions, and drag queens Hannah Conda and Chansma Bell who did an excellent job at drag story time. There were many free activities for children, with jumping castles, a rock climbing wall, face painting and Proud to Play's cricket game. As well as lots of interactive arts and craft activities facilitated by community partners.

We were joined by many community organisations that helped make the day wonderful. Thanks to Wear It Purple, Twenty 10, The Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby, Dawson Turco Lawyers, NSW Police, Reverse Garbage, ACON, Gleebooks, and City of Sydney who provided over 500 meals to the crowds.

Family Pride is a day for LGBTIQ parents and their families to get together to celebrate the wonderful people we are, and the beautiful supportive community we belong to. Days like Family Pride, and connecting with our community have never been so important.

This year we launched our long awaited Trans and Gender Diverse Parents Guide. Thank you to Katherine Wolfgramme from The Gender Centre for speaking at the launch about the importance of this important resource.

We are thrilled to have the ongoing support from our political leaders. This year we welcomed Penny Sharpe MLC, Jenny Leong, Jo Haylen, Independent Member for Sydney Alex Greenwich and city councillors including Deputy Lord Mayor Jess Miller. Our community values the time our politicians take out of their busy lives to come and celebrate with us.



Sydney - Australia



Vienna - Austria

GERMANY

This year the ILSE Mainz-Wiesbaden group (ILSE = Initiative lesbischer und schwuler Eltern) took part in the IFED for the first time. We had a picnic in the Goethe Park in Mainz and celebrated the IFED and the 10th anniversary of our group. 15 adults and 13 children aged 0 to 10 came together. We enjoyed eating and talking to each other. The older children were playing at the playground and on the lawn.



Mainz - Germany



Berlin - Germany

AUSTRIA

Due to bad weather conditions we had to change our plans very short – termed and had a nice little party in our beautiful Rainbow Families Center instead of the big party in a public park.

For our IFED (International Family Equality Day) celebration in Berlin we invited children and their parents to paint messages on signs for the upcoming Christopher Street Day celebrations. Doris Alchewilm, member of parliament -Links Party, attended and gave a speech. It was a cheerful, sunny afternoon with barbecue, painting and games in the Campus Kiezspindel in Berlin-Köpenick.



GREECE

Akadimia Platonos Park was the place, and IFED was the occasion for us to celebrate for the 7th year in the row. We celebrated with our children, with our friends and with several politicians – the latter join us every year to express their support.

We celebrated together with Ms. Elena Giannakaki, Secretary – General for Human Rights, Ms. Anneta Kavadia and Mr. Yannis Balafas who are both SYRIZA (Coalition of Radical Left) MPs, and Mr. Kostis Papaioannou, former Secretary – General for Human Rights. And, of course, Ms. Stella Belia, our organisation’s president for many years and currently running for MP with SYRIZA.

We played with our children like every year, but we also held a discussion on how politics and politicians can contribute to the structural changes that will bring our families closer to equality. Sister organisations Rainbow School and Proud Parents actively participated to this discussion

We updated the framework of our demands and were invited to participate to OKANA (Organisation Against Drugs) information projects. Such synergies will raise awareness among related scientific partners (psychologists, social workers etc) that work at schools about issues related to family equality and to discrimination faced by LGBT individuals.

When the discussion was over we all joined our buffet, cut our rainbow cake, and set a new appointment for next year.

ISRAEL

For the 7TH time since 2012, about 170 LGBT families from lot of cities through-out Israel gathered together at Tel-Aviv Meir Park. This event was organized by great volunteers from Gay Fathers organization, The Rainbow Families organization, the Tel Aviv Municipal LGBT Center and ‘Mamadyke’ forum. Our great picnic included a DJ, children`s activities like Gymboree, various crafts and a decorated frame for a family photo.

For the first time – we hosted a fabulous Drag Queen artist who read and performed a famous Israeli children story. We all had great time! Thank you for supporting this great project!



Tel Aviv - Israel

JAPAN

We had our 8thIFED rainbow family event this year at Yoyogi Park, Tokyo on April 27. This is included as a part of the Tokyo Rainbow Parade.

We set up “Oyako Kyukei Jo” (family resting booth) and exhibited our rainbow family photos. Our kids have grown up so much and this year they were able to make their own rainbow goods and sold it at the booth. Many people stopped by to ask questions, listen to our stories, use the kids’ space, and to buy our goods.

It is meaningful to show our family presence to LGBT people to encourage them, and to provide a sense of hope that they, themselves can also start their own families. Also, we have a gay couple that has their own child through surrogacy so this is gaining more interest amongst the gay community.



Tokyo - Japan

The lawsuit for equal marriage rights for LGBT couples has started in Japan and our Rainbow Family Japan leader is one of the plaintiffs. There have been workshops with speakers from countries that have been successful in this area to aid and inform us along this endeavor.

There have also been an increasing number of workshops and seminars with the aim of raising awareness to advocate change amongst the general public along with government officials’ opinion towards the LGBT community.

Best Practice Institution - City of Buenos Aires, Argentina

The city of Buenos Aires assumes diversity as a social wealth capable of transforming everyday realities into opportunities for active and meaningful participation for human development in freedom. In the last decades, great sociocultural changes were achieved that modified structures, thoughts, conceptions that bring us closer to the construction of a society free of stereotypes and prejudices that try to minimize inequality, discrimination and exclusion. That is why it is important to practice living together. Living with others, recognize, discover and assume differences to value them. Families are no exception, more and more family conformation models are attentive to fulfill their responsibilities in terms of developing healthy, emotional and favorable ties for their members, they require social and institutional recognition according to their concerns and needs. Civil society organizations then fulfill a fundamental role, participating in debates, raising awareness among communities, advising, accompanying, containing and contributing with their experiences to consolidate models of inclusive development with an impact on the design of public policies with a perspective on human rights.

Since we assumed the leadership of the Undersecretary of Human Rights and Cultural Pluralism of the government of the city of Buenos Aires, we set out to work on an expanded agenda, co-managing public policies from an integral conception in order to give answers to the different themes in a consensual way. Therefore, we mobilize wills, generating closeness between the public and the private, respecting the diversity of opinions and promoting more and better rights for the full development of people. Thus, we built a cutting-edge City in regards to the rights of the LGBTQ + collective by opening capacity building spaces and raising awareness among agents of the government, schools, health professionals as well as businesses, hotels and gastronomic spaces for customer service. The expressions that make pride visible in public space, such as the "Paseo de la Diversidad", the Carlos Jáuregui Subway Station, pedestrian paths, murals, the raising of the rainbow flag and the different celebrations we carry out in response to emblematic dates reinforce the commitment of our management to the subject. Both, at "La Casa Trans" and "Casa del Orgullo", we work jointly with civil society organizations and set out to accompany people at different times of their lives, from childhood to old age, encouraging meetings, activities and strengthening ties, for optimal



personal development. We have a Comprehensive Plan of Access to Work for Trans People, we are part of international networks such as the Latin American Network of Rainbow Cities, where we are currently in charge of the Technical Secretariat and we assist LGBTQ + Refugees in their process of adaptation to the city and its dynamic. In the framework of the International Family Equality Day we join a global initiative and every first Sunday of May we make a day in a Buenos Aires square with children's workshops that address different themes: representations of different types of families, deconstruction of stereotypes, identity and gender equality. Thus, we work for inclusion, awareness and promotion of the rights of children and youth.

This synthesis is to name part of the task we do from the government of the city of Buenos Aires. The commitment is to continue working on the construction of a more just society that respects the right of people to be, love and desire freely.

Lic. Pamela A. Malewicz

Undersecretary of Human Rights and Cultural Pluralism - Government of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires



Best Practice Policy - Paid Parental Leave for Same-Sex Couples

Principle 24 of the Yogyakarta Principles outlines the right of LGBTQ+ persons to start a family and further affirms that “no family may be subjected to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity of any of its members, including with regard to family-related social welfare and other public benefits”.

Paid parental leave is a critical social welfare benefit that has well-documented health and economic advantages for all families. Yet our analysis of paid parental leave policies in 34 OECD countries highlights that many countries may be discriminating against LGBTQ+ families by failing to implement policies that are inclusive of all family structures, leaving same-sex couples, in particular, with access to shorter durations of paid parental leave than different-sex couples.

Of the 34 OECD countries examined, we find that in 19 countries same-sex female couples receive equal durations of paid leave after the birth of a child compared to different-sex couples, whereas same-sex male couples receive equal durations of paid leave in only four countries.

Differences in paid leave between same- and different-sex couples are largely due to legally-embedded heteronormative and gendered assumptions about family and caregiving. Policies that utilize gender-restrictive language limiting paid parental leave to families with a “mother” and a “father”, can prevent families with two mothers or two fathers from accessing leave. Further, policies that allocate the majority of leave to mothers can greatly disadvantage families with no female caregiver. These types of policies also perpetuate stereotypical gender norms by reinforcing the concept that women are primary caregivers and rejecting the notion of male caregivers.

Fortunately, there are notable examples of countries which have made efforts to be inclusive of diverse family structures. For example, Iceland and Sweden both implement a “use it or lose it” policy, where each parent receives an equal, non-transferable duration of leave. To implement this policy, Iceland’s Act on Maternity/Paternity Leave and Parental Leave utilizes gender-neutral language, extending leave entitlements to each “parent”, while Sweden’s Social Insurance Act utilizes gender-inclusive language that extends parental leave to a parent as well as the parent’s “spouse” or “partner”.

Addressing gaps in access to paid parental leave is critical to advancing the global equality of LGBTQ+ families. To eliminate disparities, policymakers should redesign paid leave policies that currently designate substantially longer periods of leave to mothers, and replace gender-restrictive language with gender-neutral or gender-inclusive terminology.

Elizabeth Wong
WORLD Policy Analysis Center

To read more, including our analysis on the inclusivity of adoption-related leave, visit: <https://www.worldpolicycenter.org/resources/academic-journal-articles>



Best Practice NGO - LGBT Family Coalition, Canada

This past year the LGBT Family Coalition celebrated its 20th anniversary. In honour of this event, I was asked to tell you a bit about our organisation, the LGBT Family Coalition an advocacy group here in Canada, which has very much in common with many rainbow family organisations around the world.

We're quite a large bilingual (French and English) group of families with LGBT parents and future parents. We currently have about 1700 families that are members. This is our greatest resource (think of all those dedicated volunteers!!) and probably the single most important reason we have been able to advance as far as we have in terms of the legal and social recognition of our families.

Over the years we have been involved in, and won, many battles that are currently being waged in many countries around the world: obtaining the right to have both parents in our families legally recognized; securing access to fertility clinics and adoption; winning the right to marry; increasing the visibility of our families in schools and other public institutions; etc.

Although much has been accomplished on these forefronts we still have more work to do: adopting an ethical legal framework for surrogacy in Quebec; giving children with transgender parents proper birth certificates that reflect who their parents are; gaining back government coverage of fertility treatments (including preservation of fertility for people who are transitioning) through our social medicine programme; minimizing wait times before youth protection adoptions are finalized; continuing the fight against homophobia and transphobia in schools and social services; and most of all, making sure that the realities of our families are represented in our children's everyday environment, not as something to be tolerated, but rather as a richness and an asset to the school and to the community.

Our battles and projects in the past 20 years have been very rewarding because we have been lucky enough to see progress. These battles have brought us, as parents, together. So many life-long friendships have been forged over the years...but I would like to remind you how important it is not only for us as adults, but also for our children, to have a community that we all belong to and actively participate in.

For those of us with kids, it means letting them know, whether at the big maple syrup party (yes that's a Canadian thing), at an apple or pumpkin-picking event, at our picnics or at Pride, that they are not alone, and that they are not the only ones to have a family that differs a bit from the norm. And of course, sending them a strong message that being different is cool!

For future parents, our group means having other parents and future parents to compare notes with and to answer questions, not only through Facebook posts, but also in person, at our events.

For everyone, it means participating in a social justice movement, whether by sharing our opinions or experiences, by attending a conference and learning more about our community, or simply by being visible to neighbours, friends and family. The Coalition has been at the centre of this community and this movement in Canada for more than 20 years!



Here are some quick facts about the organization:

- We have trained over 35000 professionals who work with youth and families to be more open and inclusive about LGBT youth and families;
- We have sensitized future teachers in Quebec's 12 education faculties;
- We create dozens of new resources, including classroom activities for teachers on sexual and gender diversity (www.famillesLGBT.org/tools) which are available to all, for free;
- We are currently involved in advising the government about a reform of family law including recommendations for surrogacy;
- Each year we organize about 50 activities for the LGBT community across Quebec;
- We distribute 12 newsletters to our members with local and world-wide current events and upcoming activities for our families;
- We clock more than 6000 hours of volunteer time from our members each year ;
- We do 50-100 media interviews on LGBT issues every year;
- We are consultants for our government's action plan against homophobia and transphobia (2017-2022).

We are always looking for friends and allies to join us to work together to advance our common causes. Any IFED group that is interested in collaborating with us is welcome to contact the Coalition at any time: info@famillesLGBT.org

In solidarity!

Mona Greenbaum

Executive Director
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Best Practice NGO - Swiss Rainbow Families Association, Switzerland

The Swiss Rainbow Families Association has received this year's Equality Prize of the City of Zurich. The Association has been championing societal recognition and legal equality of rainbow families in Switzerland for many years. With the 2019 prize, the Zurich City Council honours the Association's work. This appreciation is for all those who work tirelessly for the Association's cause, says Maria von Känel, General Manager of the Rainbow Families Association. "We are grateful to the City of Zurich for this important recognition," von Känel emphasises. The Equality Prize, endowed with CHF 20,000, is awarded once every two years by the Zurich City Council.

This year's prize money will benefit children in rainbow families in its entirety. The Rainbow Families Association is currently in the process of implementing three projects. At the beginning of the next school year, a materials box will be presented and distributed to all schools and educational institutions within the City of Zurich. The suitcase enables elementary-school students to experience today's variety of possible family forms and raises awareness among specialists of day care centres and nurseries as well as teachers on how to deal with children from rainbow families.

Another project launched by the Association will set up peer groups with children from rainbow families, which will afford the children the opportunity to talk about their experiences in a protected environment. And lastly, the Association will establish a children's advocacy office for children in rainbow families, which will ensure that children get legal support on issues pertaining to adoption, recognition, divorce and death.

Better legal protection for children in rainbow families:

2019 is a decisive year for the Rainbow Families Association. The consultation process on the new bill on opening marriage to same-sex couples is currently underway. The Association demands that recognition of a child from birth and access to sperm donation both be included in the "Marriage for All" Act. This step is urgently needed for the legal protection of the children and the legal equality of the families.

Call for full equality in marital law:

With the introduction of marriage equality, the statutory provisions relating to marriage shall, in future, apply to same-sex marriages as well. Associations and organisations working for the equality of gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans individuals in Switzerland argue that the same should apply to sperm donation.

Under current legislation, sperm donation is open to opposite-sex couples. The procedure is clearly regulated and well established. With the new law on marriage equality, heterosexual couples and lesbian couples can be treated equally with regard to access to sperm donation. Inequalities in marriage that are unrelated to sexual orientation but concern the differentiation of the sexes (the rights of women vs. the rights of men) must, for various political reasons, be addressed in separate legislative proposals.

Children in rainbow families grow up normal and happy:

In Switzerland, around 30,000 children are growing up in rainbow families. Research over the past 40 years has shown that children in rainbow families develop just as happily and normally as children with opposite-sex parents. The basic prerequisite for a good outcome is the availability of at least one constant caregiver who provides the child with emotional warmth and support, creates a sustainable social environment and supports the child's individual development.

The Equality Prize 2019 has been presented to the Swiss Rainbow Families Association at a public ceremony on Monday, 24 June 2019, at the Stadthaus Zurich.

Information on the Swiss Rainbow Families Association:

www.regenbogenfamilien.ch

Information on the Equality Prize:

www.stadt-zuerich.ch/gleichstellungspreis



The Swiss Rainbow Families Association has been championing the interests of Swiss rainbow families since 2010, promoting societal recognition and legal equality. The Association offers counselling and organises meetings for rainbow families and LGBTIQ* persons who wish to have children. It also organises workshops and informational events on issues related to rainbow families. Rainbow families are families in which at least one parent considers themselves lesbian, gay, bi, trans* or queer (LGBTQ).

The International Family Equality Day (IFED)

The first International Family Equality Day took place on May 6th 2012. Fifteen organizations from nine countries participated then and numbers have been increasing ever since! A few snapshots and short reports of the latest events can be found throughout this brochure; additional information and impressions (videos, personal reports of the events) can be found on the IFED website.

In a successful event hosted by the City of Geneva, the new NGO “International Family Equality Day” was officially launched at the beginning of May, 2018.



IFED 2019 Japan

Chronicle of the International Family Equality Day

In terms of legal, political and social equality, rainbow families face very different standards depending on where in the world they live. In many countries these families have no protection at all, a fact which entails massive social, financial and legal uncertainty.

In July 2011, LGBTQ family activists from around the world gathered for the first ever International Symposium of LGBTQ parenting organizations. The symposium provided an opportunity to establish ongoing international cooperation in areas such as research, visibility and advocacy, and the development of resources and programs for LGBTQ families worldwide. The goal of the symposium was to help foster a sense of global community among the families, to increase the visibility and raise awareness about the challenges that rainbow families must overcome for social and legal acceptance.

As a key outcome of the symposium the involved family organizations from the U.S. (Family Equality Council), Canada (LGBTQ Parenting Network) and Europe (NELFA) took the opportunity to launch an official day for equality and recognition of all types of family: the International Family Equality Day, an official LGBT awareness day, which takes place every year on the first Sunday in May.

IFED aims to highlight the diversity of family structures and to strengthen solidarity among families. At the same time it calls on administrative, institutional and political representatives to support equality and recognition for all families.



Celebrating the Rainbow of Families in our World!

www.internationalfamilyequalityday.org

Promoters of the International Family Equality Day

As a sign of solidarity and strength and to promote equality for all type of families, the LGBTQ family organizations LGBTQ Parenting Network, Family Equality Council, NELFA and Coalition des familles homoparentales took the opportunity to establish ongoing international cooperation in areas such as research, visibility and advocacy, and the development of resources and programs for LGBTQ families worldwide.

Family Equality



This year marks the 40th anniversary of Family Equality, the leading advocate in the United States for the more than three million parents who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ) and their six million children. We do our work by fostering supportive communities, educating the public and pursuing policy change, all to advance both legal and lived equality for LGBTQ families, and those who wish to form them, across the United States.

Family Equality creates lasting change for our families at the policy level by organizing our work into campaigns, which are executed at the federal, regional and state levels.

We target areas where we are needed most, and we maintain a focus on three pillars of work that we believe are critical to truly changing lives and laws in the U.S. today:

1. **LGBTQ Parent Networks:** With the evolution of social media, online LGBTQ family networks have sprung up across our nation. Family Equality Council serves as the coordinating body, supporting these networks, sharing curricula and best practices, and further empowering them at the local level through the National Network of LGBTQ Family Groups.

2. **Storytelling:** Family Equality Council recognizes that public opinion (and indeed the policy formation that follows) can be dramatically impacted by emotional appeals, sometimes even more deeply than by facts and statistics. Family Equality strives to raise the visibility of LGBTQ families within main-stream America, using the power of family narratives to combat efforts to roll back or block LGBTQ equality.

3. **Family Building:** The 2018 Family Building Survey revealed that 63% of LGBTQ millennials are considering starting or growing their families in the coming years, and that the gap between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ family building aspirations is almost non-existent for the first time. Family Equality is committed to making family building as accessible for women of color in the south as it is for white men in urban areas.

We are working to ensure that family-building organizations (like fertility clinics, pharmaceutical companies, cryobanks, family law practitioners, adoption and foster care agencies) are prepared to respond sensitively and appropriately to our families.

We are connecting with employers to help them offer LGBTQ-family-friendly policies, benefits and education. And we are, of course, working with our community to make sure they have the information and support they need to access whatever path to parenthood feels like the best fit for them. The political landscape has shifted dramatically under the new administration.

We are seeing an increase in the number of bills targeting LGBTQ individuals and families, nominations of anti-LGBTQ persons to the executive branches of government and key decision-making positions across the administration. We know there is no “finish line” in this work – Family Equality represents LGBTQ families and their needs, which continue to evolve. But one thing has and will remain the same: love makes a family.

Collectively, we are a community of parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, that reaches across the globe. By standing together, we continue to change attitudes and policies, and better ensure a world where all families are respected for their commitment to one another, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

www.familyequality.org

**Are you interested to join as promoter of IFED?
Feel free to contact us!
info@internationalfamilyequalityday.org**



LGBT Family Coalition

With over 1,700 families, the LGBT Family Coalition (Coalition des familles LGBT) is the largest LGBT organization in Quebec in terms of membership. We offer services and resources in both English and French. The LGBT Family Coalition is the only advocacy group for families with LGBT parents in Quebec. The media has become increasingly focused on alternative families, as adoption, surrogacy and assisted procreation have become “hot” issues. But even as we have gained increased legal recognition, public institutions still have much to learn about our families and our particular needs. In collaboration with government bodies and the media, the Coalition works for the legal and social recognition of our families. We work to increase our visibility and raise public awareness about our diverse realities. Another mandate of the LGBT Family Coalition is to create new resources that can be used in primary and secondary schools, day care centers, doctors’ offices, community organizations and social services to raise the public’s awareness of the diversity of family structures and the impact of homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism, cissexism and gender-based harassment. Our training sessions have reached over 35,000 professionals across Quebec.



www.famillesLGBT.org

LGBTQ Parenting Network

The LGBTQ Parenting Network is a program of Sherbourne Health Centre, an innovative health care center in Toronto, Canada.



The LGBTQ Parenting Network promotes the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer parents, prospective parents, children and their families through systems analysis, resource development, community education, professional training and advocacy.

We provide access to information and resources on our website, through workshops for parents and prospective parents, and with training opportunities for health, education and social service professionals who work in our communities.

One of the themes of our work is celebrating LGBTQ families. We have a set of resources and a workshop available to help agencies and individuals celebrate gender, sexual orientation and kinship diversity in families, which are all available on our website.

www.lgbtqparentingnetwork.ca



NELFA



NELFA is the Network of European LGBTIQ* Families Associations. With 37 organisations representing 30 European countries (as of August 2019) and thousands of LGBTIQ* families, NELFA promotes the exchange of information among its members and assists in creating and developing LGBTIQ* families associations. NELFA works to ensure that children raised in LGBTIQ* families in Europe are granted the same rights as others. NELFA encourages European governments to adopt legal systems and equal opportunity policies that do not discriminate against LGBTIQ* families, whether it be legally, financially, educationally or socially. NELFA also works to ensure the freedom of movement of LGBTIQ* families within the EU without their family life being compromised by entering or settling in another member state.

NELFA was incorporated under Belgian law as an international non-profit association (aisbl) on 12 March 2012. The official headquarters are located in the Rainbowhouse in Brussels. NELFA is member of ILGA-Europe, Transgender Europe (TGEU) and supporting member of COFACE Families Europe. In 2016, NELFA has been granted participatory status with the Council of Europe. Currently, NELFA has 11 board members – means volunteers - from all over Europe. Besides their support for IFED, they are working on other major events and projects, i.e., co-organized conferences (Naples 2017, Lisbon 2018, Zagreb 2019) as well as workshops and speeches for other organizations (i.e., for the IDAHOT events 2019 at the EU Commission (DG Justice) and the EU Committee of the Regions).

Since 2016, NELFA has been taking part in the European Union's Erasmus+ program. Three projects were already successful: Around 60 rainbow family activists improved their skills by means of professional training courses (partner organization: In Dialogue) and job shadowing. Currently, NELFA is partner in a Rights Equality Citizenship project, entitled „Rainbow Shield: Enhancing the legal protection of LGBTI people in Bulgaria“. This accompanies the recent efforts to build up a European legal service for rainbow families.

www.nelfa.org



Get Involved

The month of May marked this year's IFED festivities, but also the official launch of the new NGO "International Family Equality Day".

The new IFED NGO's goals & mission are:

- * Raise awareness, provide advocacy, empower, demand social and legal acceptance for our families, and celebrate family diversity worldwide;
- * Ensure that IFED remains a neutral, unbranded event open to everybody;
- * Highlight the scope and diversity of IFED mobilization (so that this visibility impacts global public opinion and decision makers) via our global website, Facebook page and Twitter account, and the IFED Annual Report.

We are proud of what we have achieved so far and look forward to all the positive change and progress that we will be able to contribute towards!

Get involved too!

By joining IFED you can:

- * **support** global advocacy to empower rainbow families across the world to be out, proud and progress social change
- * become part of a **global community** of people committed to creating a more open and diverse society worldwide
- * join a **global network** of activists, institutions, associations and organizations exchanging ideas, information and best practices to promote equal rights for all families

Membership is open to everyone: individuals, associations, cities, institutions and companies. With flexible annual membership fees, you can choose how much to contribute.

Becoming a member is easy, join us online at:
internationalfamilyequalityday.org/become-a-member/

The IFED NGO welcomes new members!

ADVOCACY EMPOWERMENT

SOCIAL AND LEGAL ACCEPTANCE

International Family Equality Day - the NGO

The current Board of the International Family Equality Day NGO has been elected on March 2019 during the ILGA World Conference in Wellington (New Zealand) and comprises nine members from different regions.

Co-Presidents: Maivon Wahid (Fiji) and Derricia Castillo-Salazar (Belize);

Secretary: Amanda Hopping-Winn (USA)

Treasurer: Maria von Känel (Switzerland);

Board members: Ging Cristobal (Philippines), Polina Gamburg (Russia), Bess Hepworth (Hong Kong), Matcha Phorn-In (Thailand), Andrea Rivas (Argentina).

Steering Committee: Gurchaten Sandhu, Switzerland, Roberta Cecchetti, Switzerland, Anja McConnachie, United Kingdom, Nadia Ayem, United Kingdom

IFED Team: Markus Stehle, Switzerland (IFED Media), Francesca Silvestri, France (IFED Annual Report design), Virginie Broer, France (IFED Logo design), Mark Frederik Chapman, Switzerland (IFED Banners design), Miriam Förster, Germany (IFED website).

“ While the legal recognition of Rainbow Families was bolstered with the passage of Marriage Equality in 2013 in the United States, we are still seeing daily attempts to strip away our families' rights. License to Discriminate laws are popping up around the country allowing foster and adoption agencies to discriminate against prospective LGBTQ+ parents. We know that 63% of the over 6 million LGBTQ+ 18-35 years old in America are considering starting families in the coming years, and we also know that the desire to become parents is stable across income levels. We are working to remove barriers to family building to make parenthood accessible to our community regardless of geographic location, socioeconomic status, and gender identity so that America becomes a truly safe and welcoming place for Rainbow Families. ”

Amanda Hopping-Winn

Chief Program Officer, Family Equality
Secretary, IFED



Amanda Hopping-Winn

“ With more than 70 countries around the world criminalising same-sex love, that means more than 70 criminalise also criminalise rainbow families, which is why the work of IFED is so important in helping stimulate and promote an alternative global narrative for family diversity.

We know that rainbow families have become a battleground, low hanging fruit that seems easy to target. Equally I believe that rainbow families have the power to change hearts and minds. Rainbow families can be a source of strength and a powerful tool for advocacy ”

Bess Hepworth

Co-Founder, Asia-Pacific Family Forum and Network,
Executive Director, Planet Ally



Bess Hepworth

“ The legal recognition and protection of rainbow and diverse families must extend beyond their home, including the workplace. LGBTI parents are not just parents but are also part of the workforce. National employment laws, policies and programmes as well as workplace structures, procedures and culture must reflect the needs related to rainbow and diverse families. We must work together with workers' and employers organizations and governments to break down employment barriers related to family status for rainbow families. ”

Gurchaten Sandhu

IFED Steering Committee



Gurchaten Sandhu

Cooperating Partners

ILGA-Europe

ILGA-Europe are a driving force for political, legal and social change in Europe and Central Asia. We are an independent, international non-government umbrella organisation bringing together more than 600 member organisations from the region, and are part of the wider ILGA organisation.

www.ilga-europe.org



European Parliament Intergroup on LGBTI Rights

In 2014-2019, the LGBTI Intergroup gathered 150 elected Members of the European Parliament from 23 EU Member States and 7 political groups. They will continue to uphold the fundamental rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in 2019-2024.

www.lgbt-ep.eu



ECSOL

The European Commission on Sexual Orientation Law (ECSOL) is a non-governmental and non-political network of legal experts. Its origins lie in the European Group of Experts on Combating Sexual Orientation Discrimination which appointed by the Commission of the European Communities operated between 2002 and 2004.

www.sexualorientationlaw.eu



TGEU

TGEU is a European umbrella organization working to advance the equality and human rights of all transgender people through advocacy, collaboration, empowerment and research. Founded in 2005, today, the organization counts over 80 member organisations and over 80 individual members in 42 countries.

www.tgeu.org



In the photo on the right, the Ilga-Europe team supporting IFED

European Green Party

The European Green Party (EGP) is a European political party whose members include the 44 national Green parties from all across Europe, both within the EU and beyond. Human rights are the core of our beliefs and work. Through structures such as European Queer Greens, we work with all European Greens, civil society and other stakeholders to develop and enhance human rights on the national and European levels.

www.europeangreens.eu



Rainbow Rose

Rainbow Rose, the LGBTI network within the PES (Party of European Socialists), works to promote LGBTI rights, equality and diversity throughout Europe. It is an umbrella organization relaunched in 2013, gathering 30 socialist and social-democrat structures. It works at local, national and European level with NGO's, politicians and political member parties of the PES.

www.rainbowrose.eu



ILGA World

ILGA World - The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association is a worldwide federation of organisations committed to equal human rights for LGBTI people. Founded in 1978, it enjoys consultative status at the United Nations, where it speaks and advocates on behalf of more than 1,500 member organisations from 155 countries and territories.

www.ilga.org



GIN-SSOGIE

The Global Interfaith Network for People of All Sexes, Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities and Expressions (GIN-SSOGIE) is an organization headquartered in South Africa that comprises more than 350 individuals and organizations engaged in faith and spirituality. We are committed to using our beliefs and traditions to ensure that the views, values and rights of people of all sexes, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions are recognized, respected and valued.

www.gin-ssogie.org/



IFED GROWS!

- May 6th, 2012: 15 cities in 9 countries**
- May 5th, 2013: 44 cities in 17 countries**
- May 4th, 2014: 48 cities in 22 countries**
- May 3rd, 2015: 67 cities in 32 countries**
- May 1st, 2016: 74 cities in 36 countries**
- May 7th, 2017: 102 cities in 44 countries**
- May 6th, 2018: 111 cities in 48 countries**
- May 5th, 2019: 117 cities in 50 countries**

INTERNATIONAL FAMILY EQUALITY DAY #IFED2020

**FAMILY DIVERSITY
IN EDUCATION**

Interested in becoming a cooperating partner for IFED? Contact us!

info@internationalfamilyequalityday.org

**May 3th, 2020: "Family Diversity in Education"
Join us and organize your own IFED local event**

Community organizations wishing to participate please contact IFED at info@internationalfamilyequalityday.org

IFED 2020 - Family Diversity in Education

A school where everyone can fit in and feel welcome is a better, fairer and safer place for all. It's a community where no one feels inferior, singled out or left behind. It's a place where respect and diversity are valued and everybody can develop and contribute to their best.

For this reason the IFED motto for 2020 focuses on Family Diversity in Education, to contribute with added visibility and new alliances to ending discrimination in the education systems.



IFED 2019 Brazil

“Diversity in education calls on all governments, civil society and civil society organizations to ensure respect and protection of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) students, parents, and teaching and non-teaching personnel from violence, abuse and discrimination based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). We call on everyone to celebrate diversity in all its wonderful colors and forms.”



Ging Cristobal

Ging Cristobal, Philippines

“Whether in a formal educational setting or not, it is important to recognize and respecting the differences from all individuals in order to create learning environments that are safe, inclusive and equitable for as many identities as possible.”



Derricia Castillo

Derricia Castillo-Salazar, Belize

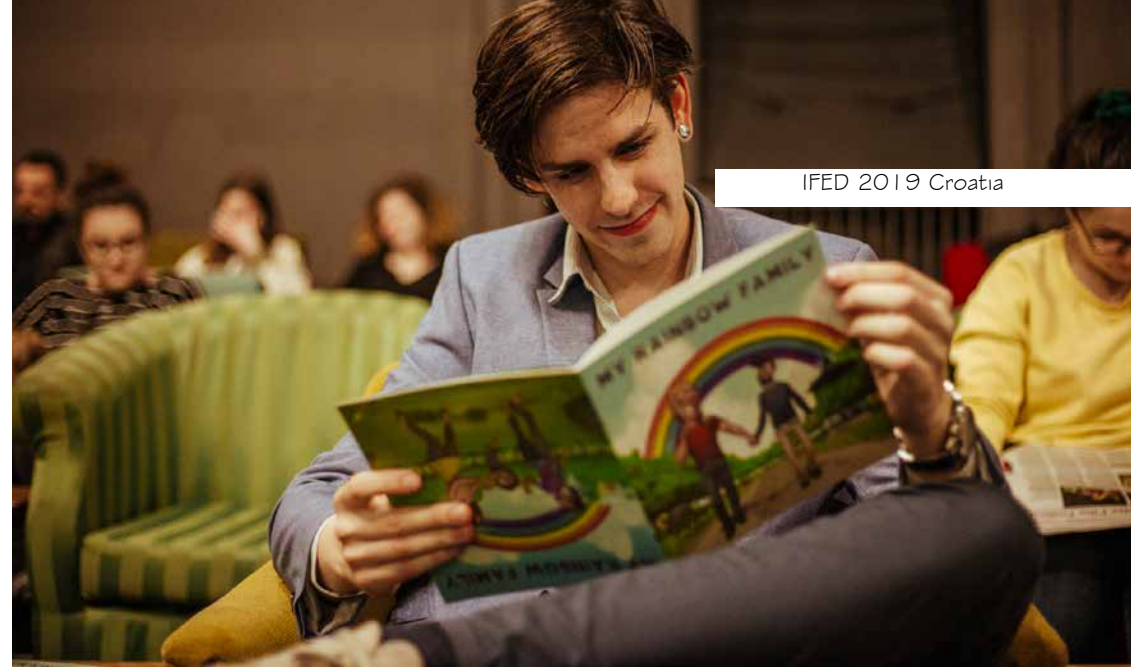
“Diversity in education means students feel welcomed, valued and connected – to each other and to the wider community. This won't happen magically, it's the role of educators to ensure an inclusive approach is embed in the curriculum. It demands intention with a purpose — and hard work – this then allows the next generation to be bought up to feel loved and having a sense of belonging!”



Maivon Wahid

Maivon Wahid, Fiji

Participating Associations



Special Country Feature - Argentina

The 2019 IFED celebration took place in the City of Buenos Aires in Las Heras Park with a high participation of families. There were recreational activities and promotion of children's rights and family diversity. For the second year in a row, this celebration received the support of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires with the special participation of the City's Undersecretary of Human Rights, the Council for the Rights of Children and Youth and the Ministry of Transportation from this city. We also had the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Argentina.

In April the "Pride House" was opened, it is the first LGBTIQ+ community center in the City of Buenos Aires, with state support and have special focus on our families and their needs.

From a proposal of the our NGO, Association of "Diverse Families" of Argentina (AFDA), the brand new Pride House has a timeline displayed in it's headquarters that shows the history and recognition of LGBTIQ+ rights and has incorporated IFED to the list of awareness dates.

This year I had the honor of representing IFED as a Board Member in the Second European Lesbian Conference that was held in Kyev, Ukraine as well as in the Human Rights Conference held in New York City in the framework of the Stonewall 50th anniversary celebrations. Both experiences were very important in terms of enriching the ties of activists around the world with IFED and making our families and the different contexts they live visible. In my case I could talk about what happens in Argentina.



Although my country is a pioneer in sexual diversity laws, our communities and families suffer significant inequalities. Why? Due to the structural causes of exclusion, such as poverty, high level of unemployment or informal employment and the lack of knowledge of public servants about our rights.

At AFDA we have researched the organization of care in rainbow families and found out that from 80 families, only one had asked the help of the workers union to negotiate an equal leave for child care. In the case of families headed by lesbians, those who stopped working to take care of the baby were those who had been pregnant, and of these only 25% could return to the labor market and earn the same as before becoming a mother, while the rest wasn't able to return to the labor market again.

We have lack of research and data on the impact of the new regulatory framework in society and its impact to achieve full equality. Not having data means not having an efficient design of public policies so that we can access full economic, cultural and social development under the same conditions as other families. We are already working in the final stage of a research carried out with the support of Stonewall UK which refers to the experience of our families in the educational system of Argentina.

With the Equal Rights Coalition, an alliance of over 40 countries committed to promoting the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people around the world, we have a unique opportunity to highlight at an international level the needs of our rainbow families and jointly seek proposals to solve them. And IFED will also be participating! Today our families can influence strongly if we remain united and visible. While there are regional campaigns that attack our rights, we celebrate with joy and pride our diversity and love. Carlos Jauregui, an historic activist of my country, said "In a society that educates us for shame, pride is a political reply." And our families and IFED are too!

Andrea Rivas

AFDA - Asociación Familias Diversas de Argentina



Special Country Feature - Brazil

The Brazilian Association of Homoaffected Families (Abrafh) once again celebrated “International Family Equality Day” in at least five cities in four states of the Brazilian federation. In each city, at least ten families were reunited. The highlights were São José do Rio Preto, with 35 people and Rio de Janeiro, with 48 people, including adults and children. The activity is already part of Abrafh’s official calendar and brings together homotransfactive families in a space of dialogue, recreation and affection.

The event took place amid a worrying scenario for homotransfactive families facing the resurgence of conservatism in certain sectors of society, including the federal government itself, which, in an attempt to crystallize the concept of nuclear family as the only possible modality, discusses public policies that disregard LGBTI+ families. The insertion of the family theme in the nomenclature of a ministry, as occurred at the beginning of the year, could represent an advance in the agenda on the plurality of families and make it possible to think of the family entity as a political agent that needs and should be the target of public specific policies. However, what we envisioned was the invisibility of the LGBTI+ families’ agenda.

The family played a central role in the 2018 election debates and continues to play a role in the current scenario. The family category is mobilized by conservative groups as a fundamental institution for the maintenance of a patriarchal, nuclear and traditional moral order - defended as the main cell of “good morals” and the formation of “good citizens”. Among progressive groups, the family is featured as a social construction that embraces different modalities according to the historical, social and geographical context. The family theme is placed at the center of an evil polarization that harms everyone, generating hatred and blindness. However, it is in this context that we continue to mobilize through affection, solidarity and companionship. Our role in defense of families is to be recognized as such, to create strategies of recognition and respect.

As an entity of struggle, in defense and valorization of homotransfactive families, Abrafh Association has a space in the representation of one of the main agenda of LGBTI + movements - the possibility of having their affective nuclei considered families - and is inserted through virtual social networks that



arrive to all Brazilian states in the debate on the institutional public agenda and encourages the participation of associate members.

Abrafh presents itself as an institution that brings families together, in addition to being able to exchange information and the ability to intervene in the social agenda, to establish a new dialogue with society, especially with those who delegitimize their lives, individual identities and repudiate recognition of their modalities as families. Thus, by assuming the status of different, and establishing a representative entity to fight for their rights, they are valuing what they are and assuming a position of autonomy in the struggle for recognition.

With the growing publicity of the diverse types of families differently from that traditional happy nuclear families used to feature in TV ads, thanks to the advent of identity-identifying political movements that valued differences, homosexual families began a process of getting out of the closet and proudly began to perform in the most diverse spaces. Contrary to the advances in the agenda of these subjects - who have gained over the last two decades, the right to adoption, marriage and the sharing of rights deriving from the recognition of same-sex civil union, to name a few -, they argue. These are sectors of Brazilian society whose objectives are the perpetuation of heterosexist models that subordinate dissident sexualities and stigmatize different modalities of family entities.

In all the cities where the events were held, families were invited to reflect on the importance of staying together and resisting, as the theme of the event itself suggests this year. Topics such as food, education, family and social life, basic care and affective ties were addressed. In some cities, other legal issues have



been raised, such as the right to family in adoption, the right to live with parents, the fight against intolerance as well as parental alienation.

Cultural, artistic (singing, dancing, theater, etc.) and sports activities were developed to favor the experience of the theme. In the end, picnics were plentiful, encouraging the consumption of low-calorie, low-processed natural foods. However, we also emphasized the celebration of local cultures by incorporating in the menu of the day some typical foods, such as Minas Gerais cheese bread, carioca Mate ice tea and São Paulo Bauru sandwich.

The Association remains committed to the protection of the interests and rights of its members and the positive visibility of LGBTI+ families. In its sixth year of existence, Aбрафh has grown exponentially and already brings together more than 1,500 Brazilian families throughout the country and abroad. Brazilian families resident abroad and others who recently emigrated maintain ties or join Aбрафh and consolidate the dream of an international representation.

Aбрафh has established itself as a reference institution in the fight for guarantees and rights of Brazilian LGBTI+ families. Increasingly recognized, their representativeness is revered and required. Thus, consolidating its objectives for the new year, many local and regional coordinations were implemented. Associate members assumed specific responsibility for fostering Aбрафh's agenda in cities and states. Thus, Aбрафh advances to the interior of the country.

Aбрафh presents a challenge to contemporary Brazilian society: LGBTI+ people come together through affection and, having children or not, they call themselves families. Although the struggle in defense of different family modalities was not born with Aбрафh, as the foundation of the institution itself is the result of this struggle, it finds a formal entity capable of gathering the agendas of their own families and focusing their efforts on the struggle for the possibility of full development, self-reliance on self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem.

Elias Santos Serejo

Aбрафh Communications Director



Special Country Feature - Croatia

This year in Croatia there was a ground-breaking event in occasion of this year's IFED and IDAHOT celebrations! The Croatian rainbow families association „Dugine obitelji“ (Rainbow families) held a three day conference titled „Our kids are ok“, which aimed to gather those interested in discussing family equality both in Croatia and the region of ex-Yugoslavia.

The conference was a full success! Three days of intensive discussions about the future in the Balkans for LGBTIQ* parents and their children, many talks about the recent research and scientific findings and a cosy #IFED2019 Sunday afternoon with adults and kids were just some of the activities that were held in early May in Zagreb, Croatia – a truly amazing and inspiring experience for all the attendees.

The main motivation behind the conference, as the coordinator of the Rainbow Families Croatia association Daniel Martinovic stated, was that the well-being of children growing up in rainbow families is still a topic of debate not just in Croatia, but also in the neighbouring countries and in the European Union.

Through the conference we wanted to discuss questions such as what are the real experiences of children in such existing families? What are the scientific findings in the last years, and what is the legal framework for these families in Croatia and the other EU countries? What is the situation in the ex-Yu countries that are planning to join the EU? What is being done to improve the current situation, and how can we as a society support and help both children and the parents in rainbow families?

„We see various headlines in the media, we see statement from politicians that aren't based on real life or scientific facts, we see still prejudices against our families. With this conference, we wanted to talk about the real situation – and we are glad that we had the chance to organize such an event!“ said Martinovic.

The attendance and the interest from both the general public and rainbow families for the conference surprised the organizers – not only it was visited by families and members of the LGBTIQ community in Croatia, but guests from other ex-Yugoslavian countries arrived just to take part and participate in the various workshops or listen to the presentations during the conference. Families and individuals from Slovenia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well



as those from France, Germany and Switzerland – all contributed to the international feel of the conference and showed that the challenges that rainbow families are facing in south-eastern Europe aren't that different from country to country.

During the conference various activities were held, such as the showing of a short documentary titled “Unfit” (cro: “Nepodobni”) about Mladen and Ivo, a Croatian gay couple who wish to become adoptive/foster care parents – but the Ministry of Family in Croatia stopped their application and they are now suing the state.

The conference was organized with the support of the Network of European LGBTIQ* Families Associations (NELFA) which held a short presentation on the first day about their work by its vice-president Björn Sieverding, along with a discussion about the various rainbow family initiatives throughout Europe. Afterwards, Boris Vrdoljak, one of the Rainbow Families coordinators led an interactive workshop focusing on family stories and experiences of the conference participants with an emphasis on different national contexts.

The Croatian association organized an exchange of experiences of rainbow families and an informal gathering with a children's corner and some activities for our youngest. Both current and future rainbow families attended, and celebrated the occasion of the International Family Equality Day (IFED) and the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT).

The second day of the conference was highlighted by a panel that involved the participation of activists from various ex-Yugoslavian states, that discussed the fact that although geographically close, the legal frameworks, social acceptance and the status of children and their LGBTI parents are very different in the countries of the former Yugoslavia. But there are also many similarities - Croatia and Slovenia as members of the European Union have a similar legal framework, but the differences are still present – Slovenia has relatively recently been just one step away from marriage equality. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are daily debates regarding their first Pride March in Sarajevo, while in Montenegro the debate is currently focused on the adoption of the Law on Life Partnership. And in Serbia the question is raised whether the recent new family member in the family of their lesbian Prime Minister will help the improvement of LGBTI family rights in a country where they currently are non-existent. The panel participants, Lana Gobec, president of Legebitra (Slovenia), Darko Pandurevic, Sarajevo Open Centre programme coordinator (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Danijel Kalezic, president of Queer Montenegro (Montenegro), Aleksandar Savic, coordinator of “Da se zna” (Serbia) and Daniel Martinovic, coordinator of Dugine obitelji (Croatia) took the opportunity to discuss in details the questions mentioned, and to lay down the foundations for a larger collaboration in the future when it comes to LGBTI family rights in the region.

And on the last day of the conference, two panels/workshops were held – one focusing on the legal background of LGBTI family rights, during which the question of how did the States in the “western” Europe achieve marriage equality and what was the role of the legal claims, lawsuits and civic engagement during that process. An interesting topic was the fact that Croatia is fortunately affected by the legal framework of the EU that in theory is protecting the rights of children and their LGBTI parents – but to use that framework it is needed to pursue lawsuits against the state of Croatia in the cases where same-sex couples were denied access to adoption, foster care or other family services. Will also the LGBTI families in other states that will sometime in the future join the European Union have to resort to similar strategies?

Finally, the conference was concluded with the second panel – a scientific meeting that presented the scientific research on LGBTI parenting in Croatia and Europe to the attendees, focusing on the ones that have been conducted over the last few years. The lecturers of the meeting, various scientists that are

working in the fields of psychology, sociology and pedagogy research, shared their findings and topics such as the motivation for parenting in the LGBTIQ* community, the attitudes towards rainbow families from the general population, what kind of attitudes have the university students in Croatia and various other interesting topics when it comes to same-sex parenting were touched upon during the discussion with the present public.

One of the major points that were mentioned was the challenge of conducting scientific research on rainbow families – with small samples due to the fact most families are afraid and still remain “in the closet”, the reluctance from the state(s) to finance such research, and finally the utmost importance of scientific facts and fact based discussions in today’s society.

“We are definitely looking forward to organize something similar next May, and currently we are slowly starting to plan what we can do in 2020. We are glad to have had various panels and presentations, but the opportunity to socialize with one another, for example during lunch or through parenting workshops where LGBT parents from Switzerland, Serbia and Croatia had the chance to meet and exchange experiences, is really invaluable to us because we feel we are something like a minority within a minority.” stated Martinovic, one of the organizers of the conference.

“Some of the ideas for the next year is to have more content for children, such as an animator or playroom, more workshops where we can learn or share something together, and of course, hopefully, host people from even more different countries. We see that there is a need, our guests kept repeating that they were thrilled to have an event like this happening on the subject of LGBTIQ families and LGBTIQ parenting in the region. This conference is the best indicator of how we can use our positive example of our association to encourage not only other rainbow families across Croatia, but also beyond the borders of our country.”

Daniel Martinovic

Coordinator of Dugine obitelji



Special Country Feature - Russia

“More than long expected”, Tomsk, Siberian Federal District, Russia

Today in the Russian Federation, the legislative does not regulate the legal aspects of the relationship between same-sex couples and unions, the birth of children in same-sex unions, issues of inheritance and surrogate motherhood. The society still maintains a high level of homophobia and many myths regarding the question of the birth and upbringing of children in same-sex unions. LGBT families are forced to live covertly, which creates a permanent stressful background. Over the past 5 years, two cases of the removal of previously adopted children in the family of a transgender man and a gay couple have become known. There were no cases of withdrawal of biological children from LGBT families or from LGBT people in Russia or they remained unknown.

Since 2014, in the city of Tomsk (Siberia, Russia) an initiative group supporting LGBT parents “More than long expected” has been founded. This group is created by LGBT parents for LGBT families who are already raising children in same-sex unions and families who are only planning parenthood in their lives.

As part of working with our target group, we highlight several areas:

1. Work with LGBT parents. In this area, we hold meetings for parents without children and meetings for parents with children. Psychological meetings are attended only by parents and work in a group with a psychologist, ask questions, solve difficult moments that are now relevant in their lives. There are also groups for parents, where they can come along with their children. Or, such groups may attend LGBT people, hetero-friendly families, specialists in helping professions. On such groups, participants can discuss pressing issues that relate to the social, medical, domestic aspects of the birth and upbringing of children.

In 2019, within the framework of such meetings, the “Living Library” cycle took place, where a LGBT family or members of an LGBT family serves as a book. Within the framework of the Living Library work format, the main characters answer the questions of the participants. It should be noted that the main characters in 2019 were: mother raising a child in an LGBT family, adult children growing up in an LGBT family, a man who became a donor for a lesbian couple and taking part in raising a daughter, One of the heroines was a mother raising a teenager’s son in an LGBT family and a mother raising two adult sons

in a LGBT family. It was a delightful experience, learning about the life of a wide variety of LGBT families in our city. About their fears and successes. These meetings are also valuable because people can communicate with each other, get acquainted, and not experience their problems and fears alone.



2. In 2019, with the support of COC Netherlands, we conducted a study among LGBT parents and found out the actual needs of the parents themselves and those who are thinking about parenthood. We conducted 30 in-depth interviews, 30 people took part in focus groups in three cities of the Siberian Federal District: Omsk, Tomsk and the city of Novosibirsk. We also launched an online survey, in which more than 430 people took part. The results were processed and analyzed. Thus, now we can focus on the actual picture of needs among LGBT parents, to respond to a real request. It was interesting that the legal aspect of parenthood and legal issues came to the fore, as in Russia issues of same-sex partnerships, inheritance, parenthood and issues of surrogate motherhood are not regulated by law, including all issues related to emigration. Issues of a psychological nature came to the background. Medical counseling and parental meetings took third place.

3. Another area of our work is working with specialists of helping professions (psychologists, psychiatrists, psychotherapists, teachers, medical staff, peer counselors). In this area, we conduct seminars on the topic: “Sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual characteristics. Counseling LGBT + people.” Since 2017, we have trained over 140 people.

In addition, we hold photo contests for families. We conduct a group in a social network, advise online and conduct face-to-face consultations, actively share our experience with other initiative groups in the Siberian Federal District of Russia, cooperate with journalists from independent media, with other public organizations in the city of Tomsk.

We will be very happy to answer your questions.

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Special Country Feature - Taiwan

2019 was both bittersweet and exciting for rainbow families and the LGBT+ community in Taiwan. Taiwan made history on May 17 as the legislature voted on the implementation of same-sex marriage, thus becoming the first country in Asia to do so. We are very proud of the milestone we have achieved, yet we still have so much work to do, for example, the new law only extend limited adoption rights to same-sex couples.

Over the years, Taiwan LGBT Family Rights Advocacy (TLFRA), established in 2005 first as a lesbian mom group, has been standing firmly with our LGBT+ families through the whole journey to marriage equality. Even though LGBT+ couples are still not legally allowed to use artificial reproductive technology in Taiwan, many couples have chosen to use artificial reproduction and surrogacy services overseas to fulfill their dream of being parents.

What TLFRA has done is building a close connection with more than three hundred LGBT families and providing all sorts of counseling services for LGBT+ parents or parents-to-be. We also build allyship with the adoption institution, to make sure LGBT+ couples get equal service from social workers and the justice system.

We have fought a good fight with our allies to have our relationships recognized by law. Our mission after marriage equality is to advocate for LGBT+ parents' enjoyment of full equality of family rights, which include the legalization of assisted reproduction and adoption for LGBT+ couples and LGBT+ education in schools. Our goal is not only creating a safe space for our rainbow families but also a better world for everyone!

Chiajong Chu

Administrative Secretary
Taiwan LGBT Family Rights Advocacy

For more information, please visit:
<https://www.facebook.com/twlgbtfamily/>
https://www.lgbtfamily.org.tw/index_en.php



Special Country Feature - United Kingdom

In 2019, Pride events in my UK home and abroad have a particular significance – coming fifty years after the famous ‘Stonewall Inn Riots’ in New York City.

London Pride itself, in its current form, also celebrated a silver jubilee being a spritely 25 years old. Oh how I enjoyed the party, night and day. I marched with my Trade Union UNISON and 1.5 million others on the 6th of July earlier this year to proudly celebrate and express my identity as Black Lesbian co-parent of three children. I smiled I laughed, I cheered, I clapped, I danced. On the 7th of July at UK Black Pride I striped my cheeks with rainbow crayon and flung my 7 year old daughter in the air with glee. However, that evening a stark reality shattered the glitter. I was reminded LGBT+ families and Queer-Based families are feeling the weight of the possibility of a no deal Brexit.

For me UK Black Pride and the other pride events across the UK in towns I have lived in - Manchester, Hastings, Brighton, Edinburgh , Bristol to name a small handful - is a time to both celebrate recent advances and to highlight the many,



complex challenges which LGBT+ communities still confront. The outward facing fabulousness of non-discrimination frameworks including adoption and employment rights belie limited efficacy. Deficiencies within LGBT+ asylum processes serve as a striking post colonial reminder of how the UK government still treat people from its former colonies. LGBT+ and Queer people of colour being at the bottom of the immigration pile when it comes to seeking safety in a country that was responsible for leaving the LGBT+phobic laws they are likely now trying to flee. Lastly but no less shamefully, the on-going controversy surrounding the Gender Recognition Act 2004 means that Britannia cannot yet rule the waves of full sexual orientation and Gender Identity equality (SOGI).

Yet, despite these pressing needs of LGBT+ and Queer populations in the UK we and our families especially, have been largely drowned out by the all-consuming Brexit debates. We have not been invited to the table where Brexit conversations are taking place. That is disappointing given we should have a say in the most important far reaching negotiations the UK has ever conducted. Shouldn't we be present to discuss the potential impact of leaving the European Union upon our lives. Yet we are not.

I find this odd given representatives of most of UK's main political parties were present at the Pride in London celebrations – to publicly reaffirm their commitment to LGBT+ rights. Rights largely garnered from the EU, the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice. All of which have frequently nudged and occasionally shoved the UK into granting greater rights and freedoms for LGBT+ people. Brexiteers find this assertion ludicrous but they are in willful denial of the facts. While it is certainly true that the EU did not direct civil partnerships nor same sex/equal marriage provisions in UK law, it is also true that several EU countries were well ahead of us. The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and France all implemented equality in this area first which made it difficult for legislators to ignore our campaigning line, which stated that we should keep up with our EU partners at the time. By all accounts, this was a persuasive argument.

So what now?

LGBT+ and Queer families, activists and campaigners must remain vigilant. True there is no reasonable view that scopes that once free of EU membership, Parliament will immediately affect wholesale removal of LGBT+ protections.

However there is a legitimate fear that future governments will reduce LGBT+ based protections in subtle, yet important, ways, perhaps to remain trade competitive to other less SOGI oriented countries we intend entering trade agreements with. Moreover it is not just current domestic law that may shift. Future protections are also at stake. In leaving the EU, the queer communities and our families in my country are also going to miss out on future developments. Recent rulings in pension rights, for example, like the 2018 judgment of the CJEU in *MB v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions*. In that decision, the Luxembourg judges condemned the UK for requiring that a trans woman annul her marriage before accessing pension entitlements which were consistent with her preferred gender. After Brexit, LGBT+ and Queer people in my country will no longer benefit from SOGI-orientated advancements in EU law.

The UK must continue to encourage and support programmes to create visibility and understanding for LGBT+ people and our families our Queer lives matter now more than ever. Membership of the EU has through its various institutions and agencies – tangibly improved the social, political and economic position of LGBT+ individuals and families across the UK. I for one am under no illusion that leaving the EU will have an overwhelmingly negative effect on Queer and, LGBT+ communities in my country as we become deprived of key resources, important opportunities and identity-affirming networks.

Jo Cox was a Labour Party MP sadly murdered for her stance on race immigration and SOGI equality. In 2016 in her first speech to the house of commons her inspirational words “We are far more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us.” were heard across the UK.

While the exact consequences of Brexit may be impossible to predict, for LGBT+ and Queer- based families there is much to be concerned about; let us hope that while we may become divided from Europe, we do not become divided from our rights.

Dettie Gould

Trade Unionist, Queer Human rights activist and writer.



Overview of research on trans parent families (non-exhaustive)

Susie Bower-Brown, Centre for Family Research, University of Cambridge

Although there is now a considerable amount of research on same-sex parent families, the same cannot be said about trans parent families. Whilst other LGBTQ+ parents also still face considerable stigma, it is clear that trans acceptance lags behind that of same-sex parents. As Ryan and Martin (2000) suggest, “even those people who have become completely comfortable with the idea that gays and lesbians can parent as well as heterosexuals can find the notion of a parent who has crossed gender lines deeply distressing”. Trans parents are often grouped with same-sex parents, under the “LGBTQ+ parent” umbrella. This is partially useful, as they may have similar experiences related to coming out, disclosure and stigma (Hines, 2006). However, most LGBTQ+ family research focuses solely on same-sex parents. Being trans is not a sexual orientation, so there may be a number of unique factors affecting trans parent families, such as high levels of transphobic stigma and the transition process. Equally, trans parent families exist in a number of different forms: parents may have children before coming out as trans or they may have children after transitioning. Trans parents may parent alone, in a same-sex relationship, in a heterosexual relationship, in polyamorous relationships or with co-parents. Trans parents and non-binary parents may be affected differently by gender norms. Therefore, it is important for research to investigate heterogeneity within the group of trans parents.

Trans is an umbrella term that refers to “people who do not embrace traditional binary gender norms of masculine and feminine and/or whose gender identity or expression does not fit with the one they were assigned at birth” (James-Abra et al., 2015). “Cisgender” (or “cis”) means someone “whose gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth; someone who is not trans” (James-Abra et al., 2015). Trans as a term is inclusive of non-binary and binary trans identities. Binary trans identities can be described as those that fit within the existing gender binary of male and female, non-binary is an umbrella term referring to people who identify as a combination of both genders, a gender



outside the binary, or no gender at all (Frohard-Dourlent, Dobson, Clark, Doull, & Saewyc, 2017; Richards et al., 2016; Yeadon-Lee, 2016). Although it is recognized that not all gender-diverse people use the word trans, it will be used here as it is widely accepted as the most inclusive term (Downing, 2013; Sanger, 2008).

Trans people and their families have existed cross-culturally and throughout history (Burns, 2018; Stryker, 2008). However, research on trans people within the family context is sparse – a recent empirical review of research on trans parents found only twenty-six studies between 1990-2017 to include in the review (Hafford-Letchfield et al., 2019). Within the media, trans people are not traditionally viewed as “family” people, and within academia, research is often limited to medical care and mental health (Dierckx & Platero, 2018; von Doussa, Power, & Riggs, 2017). As As Tornello and Bos (2017) suggest, “being transgender and being a parent are sometimes seen as contradictory.” However, it is estimated that 25%–49% of trans people are parents (Dierckx, Motmans, Mortelmans, & Tsjoen, 2016). The lack of empirical research on trans parents, coupled with negative preconceptions about their ability to parent effectively,



means that trans parents have consistently been denied the same rights as cis parents (Biblarz & Savci, 2010). In 2007, a Washington court did not grant primary custody to a trans parent because “the impact of [the parent’s planned] gender reassignment surgery on the children is unknown” (Cooper, 2013). In a UK survey, 45% of 188 trans parents saw their children less or lost contact with them after their gender transition (McNeil, Bailey, Ellis, Morton, & Regan, 2013). Within UK legislation, trans men or non-binary people who give birth must be registered as the mother, rather than father or parent, potentially conflicting with transmasculine people’s gender identity (F. R. White, 2018). This shows inherent cisnormativity and discrimination against trans people who wish to become parents.

Transitioning before/whilst becoming a parent

The number of young people identifying as trans is increasing – referrals to the U.K.’s Gender Identity and Development Service (GIDS) has increased from 97 in 2009/10 to 2,519 in 2017/18 (GIDS, 2018). Therefore, more and more trans people are becoming parents after they start identifying as trans. There are a number of paths to parenthood for trans people, including unassisted reproduction, assisted reproduction or adoption, but there are also a number of biological and social barriers. Adoption agencies lack experiences with trans adopters, and many prospective parents do not pursue adoption due to expectations of transphobia within the system (Pyne, 2012; Stotzer, Herman, & Hasenbush, 2014). There are no studies that look at children who have been adopted by trans parents. Attempts to encourage more LGBTQ+ people to adopt have focused on same-sex, cisgender parents (Perry, 2017), and thus trans inclusive policy is necessary.

Trans people may use a number of types of assisted reproduction to become parents, including fertility preservation, donor insemination, transmasculine pregnancy and surrogacy (De Wert et al., 2014). One qualitative Canadian study of trans parents and their partners found that most participants reported negative experiences with assisted reproduction, including problems with paperwork, inappropriate pronoun use and cisnormative assumptions about bodies (James-Abra et al., 2015). Pyne (2012), in a Canadian focus group study, also found that trans parents felt they lacked support from fertility clinics. Studies in the US and Australia examining trans pregnancy specifically found that trans men experienced a significant lack of institutional support within



healthcare systems, where staff lacked knowledge about male pregnancy (Hoffkling, Obedin-Maliver, & Sevelius, 2017; Light, Obedin-Maliver, Sevelius, & Kerns, 2014). This led to trans men finding the experience isolating and alienating (Charter, Ussher, Perz, & Robinson, 2018). Pearce and White (2019) highlight the way in which the media sensationalizes male pregnancy, potentially contributing to the lack of institutional support for men and non-binary people who give birth.

There has been much debate within academia about whether trans people should even receive the same reproductive rights as cis people – a debate that can be seen as highly transphobic (Pyne, 2012). Some ethical considerations include whether the perceived pathological nature of being trans makes someone unfit to parent and whether children will experience atypical gender development or adjustment problems (Baetens et al., 2003; De Wert et al., 2014). There is only one study to date that has followed up children conceived by trans parents using assisted reproduction. For 12 years, Chiland et al. (2013) followed a French trial cohort of 42 children who were born to trans men and their female

partners through donor insemination. They reported that the children were developing well and therefore recommended that trans people should be afforded the same reproductive rights as cis people. However, the study was purely observational and reported that the children “look like ordinary little boys and girls, not young androgynes or transgenders” (Chiland et al., 2013). This study therefore upholds cisnormativity and perpetuates transphobia by portraying trans people as “other” and second rate to “ordinary” cis people (McGuire, Kivalanka, Catalpa, & Toomey, 2016). Considering that over 90% of trans people surveyed in the U.K. have been told that trans people are not normal (McNeil et al., 2013) there is an urgent need for rigorous, empirical research that does not further pathologize trans identities.

Transitioning after becoming a parent

Although more and more trans people are transitioning before becoming parents, in 2009 the median age for presenting for referral to a gender identity clinic was 42 years (Reed, Rhodes, Schofield, & Wylie, 2009). As those who transition later in life are more likely to be parents (Grant et al., 2011), many people have children before they realize they are trans or begin their transition. Parents who transition after having children have consistently been discriminated against in custody battles, under the assumption that their children will be negatively affected by their transition (Chang, 2003; Pyne, 2012). A book written by two prominent sexologists in the 1960s suggested that young children of trans women should be told “that daddy will be living far away and probably unable to see them” (Green & Money, 1969).

There is little evidence to support the idea that children will be negatively affected by a parent’s gender transition, although there is also little evidence to refute it. A considerable proportion of the research on children with trans parents has been concerned with their gender development and sexual orientation – suggesting that non-heterosexuality or atypical gender development is in itself a negative outcome, further eliciting stigma against the LGBTQ+ population (Herek, 2010; T. White & Ettner, 2007). For example, Green (1978) studied transsexual parents in the post-divorce context and found that all children demonstrated typical gender development and heterosexuality. Although this study was limited in sample size (16 children came from 7 families with a transsexual parent) and scope, Green concluded that children raised by transsexual parents do not differ in sexual identity from children raised in more

“conventional family settings.” These results have since been replicated: 17 out of 18 children referred to the GIDS because they had a trans parent had no concerns with gender identity, with only one child having transient concerns (Freedman, Tasker, & di Ceglie, 2002). The children were more likely to have experienced marital conflict than children referred to the GIDS for their own gender identity concerns, pointing to greater marital conflict in trans parent families, which is a risk factor for child adjustment (Haines, Ajayi, & Boyd, 2014). Haines’ et al.’s (2014) online survey of 50 trans parents in the U.S. also found that they face unique challenges: parents worried about the impact of their gender identity on their children and found that they had to balance their transition alongside parenting, meaning their children ‘transitioned’ as well (Haines et al., 2014). Therefore, it suggests that a parent’s transition, although not inherently harmful to children, may be stressful for the parent and child.

Two U.S. studies (T. White & Ettner, 2004, 2007) have looked beyond gender development in children with trans parents. Ten therapists who had worked with trans parents completed questionnaires, reporting that young children were able to adapt well to a parent’s transition, as were older children if parental conflict was low (T. White & Ettner, 2004). White and Ettner (2007) also interviewed 27 trans parents, reporting again that a younger age at transition and a positive parent-child relationship predicted better child outcomes post-transition. Children who perceived higher stigma around their parent’s transition experienced a decline in academic performance, suggesting that stigma can negatively influence children. Veldorale-Griffin and Darling (2016) surveyed 73 trans parents, finding that stigma negatively impacted parents’ perception of family functioning, suggesting that stigma might affect both parents and children. Veldorale-Griffin (2014) also surveyed 48 trans parents and 9 adult children, asking them about their experiences of a parental gender transition. Ninety-two percent of parents experienced stress surrounding disclosure and transition, most commonly familial rejection, job discrimination and fear of transphobia and violence. Adult children reported that family reactions to their parent’s transition were mostly negative or mixed. The adult children also reported stress around bullying at school and having to alter how they view their trans parent. However, most parents and children experienced positive or no changes in their relationship after the transition – suggesting that a gender transition can have a positive impact within the family. Therefore, the limited research suggests that a parental gender transition is not necessarily a negative

experience for children and can have benefits. However, the associated stigma, stress and parental conflict can be problematic for family functioning and child adjustment.

Future research

As demonstrated in this short review, there is some notable research on trans parent families. However, studies so far suffer from small sizes and are cross-sectional. There is a need for mixed-method research that includes multiple informants: school-aged children's experiences and perspectives should be included in particular. Trans-parent families themselves are also a diverse and heterogeneous group and research thus far has been limited by transnormativity, the assumption that all trans people have a fixed, binary gender identity and undertake a medical transition (Johnson, 2016). This has limited research on non-binary parents, and therefore future research should explore non-binary parents' experiences. Equally, as in most family research, there is a lack of research on trans people of color and those in low-income situations. Using an intersectional framework, multiple oppressions incur different stigmas, and so research should focus on the experiences of these families (Crenshaw, 1991; De Vries, 2012). Trans people should also be included at all stages of the research, in order to move from research on trans people to research with trans people, parting ways from the history of problematic and traumatic research by cis researchers on trans people (Vincent, 2018).



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Overview of research on same-sex parent families (2018-2019)

Anja McConnachie

A wealth of research on lesbian mother families, and a growing body on gay father families, has focused on child adjustment and the quality of parent-child relationships. The findings of this research has consistently demonstrated that children in same-sex parent families are just as likely to have positive relationships with their parents and to be well adjusted, as children in heterosexual parent families (Anderssen, Amlie, & Ytterøy, 2002; Averett, Nalavany, & Ryan, 2009; Carneiro, Tasker, Salinas-Quiroz, Leal, & Costa, 2017; Farr, 2017; Fedewa, Black, & Ahn, 2014; Goldberg, Gartrell, & Gates, 2014; Susan Golombok et al., 2017, 2014; Tasker, 2005). The purpose of the current report is to provide a non-exhaustive review of the most recent research on same-sex parent families, extending the comprehensive overview by Martine Gross in the 2017 IFED network annual report (Gross, 2017) and the 2017-2018 review published in the 2018 IFED network annual report (Ayed and McConnachie, 2018). The current report will focus specifically on two key developments in the research on same-sex parenting: research on the attachment security of children in same-sex parent families and research on the mental health of adult offspring of lesbian mothers.

Child Attachment Security in Same-sex Parent Families

Prior to the last year (2018-2019) only a couple of studies on same-sex parents measured children's attachment security (Erich, Hall, Kanenberg, & Case, 2009; Golombok & Badger, 2010; Golombok, Tasker, & Murray, 1997). As child attachment security has a key influence on current and later adjustment (Brumariu & Kerns, 2010; Fearon et al., 2010; van Ijzendoorn, Schuengel, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 1999) it is important to study the attachment security of children in same-sex parent families. Further, given the historical emphasis on mothers as primary attachment figures (Bowlby, 1969) and presumptions that women are more sensitive and naturally suited to parenting (Silverstein & Auerbach, 1999), research on the attachment security of children in gay father families is especially important.

Feugé, Cyr, Cossette, and Julien (2018) were the first to investigate the association between gay fathers sensitivity and their children's attachment security



and behaviour problems. The Canadian sample comprised 68 gay fathers with 34 children aged between 1 and 6 years, the majority of whom were adopted in their first year of life. The sensitivity of both fathers in each family and the child's attachment security to each father were measured during parent-child interactions at home, which were assessed by independent coders, and child adjustment was measured using a standardised questionnaire. The analyses found that few children were low in attachment security, or were in the clinical range for behaviour problems. Within couples, the level of parenting sensitivity shown was similarly high and the level of attachment security to each father was also similar. There was a significant moderate association between gay fathers parenting sensitivity and child attachment security, which is noteworthy given that research on heterosexual fathers has only identified weak associations between parenting sensitivity and child attachment security. The level of sensitivity displayed by gay fathers was also compared to other studies using the same methodology and it was found that gay fathers showed a similar level of sensitivity to foster-to-adopt mothers, highlighting that fathers can be just as sensitive as mothers. As expected, it was also found that children who were higher in attachment security had lower levels of behaviour problems.

Carone, Baiocco, Lingiardi, and Kerns (2019) compared child attachment security between 33 children in gay father surrogacy families and 37 children in lesbian mother donor-insemination families, during middle childhood. Children

in gay father families and lesbian mother families perceived high attachment security to their parents, as indicated by their responses to a self-report questionnaire. Additionally, comparisons to normative scores of children raised in heterosexual parent families showed that neither children of gay fathers nor children of lesbian mothers differed from children with heterosexual parents in their perceived attachment security. Children reported greater attachment security when their parents showed greater warmth and responsiveness toward them, when their parents reported greater willingness to serve as an attachment figure, and when parents displayed low levels of rejection and negative control.

As well as perceived attachment security, Carone et al. (2019) also investigated children's utilization of parents as safe havens (i.e. emotional support) and as secure bases (i.e. instrumental support). Previous research on heterosexual parent families has shown that although children rely on both parents for both types of support, there is a tendency for children to use their mothers more for emotional support and their fathers more for instrumental support. However, one unanswered question is whether children's preference for their mothers as safe havens and fathers as secure bases is a consequence of parental gender, or of their parental role - as a primary or secondary caregiver. The findings showed that while children reported high levels of both emotional and instrumental support from both parents, they used the primary attachment figure more as a safe haven and the secondary attachment figure more as a secure base, suggesting that parental role may be more important than parental gender in determining the primary type of support provided by a parent. This finding also highlights that both attachment needs (secure base and safe haven) can be adequately met irrespective of whether a child has two fathers, two mothers or a mother and a father.

McConnachie et al. (2019) compared the attachment security of adopted children (10-14 years) in 30 gay father, 29 lesbian mother and 38 heterosexual parent families using the Friends and Family Interview (FFI) in the second phase of a longitudinal study. The study was the first to compare children in gay father families and lesbian mother families to a group of heterosexual parent families on the four dimensions of attachment: secure-autonomous, insecure-dismissing, insecure-preoccupied and insecure-disorganised. Children in gay father families showed significantly higher levels of secure attachment than children

in heterosexual parent families, significantly lower levels of insecure-preoccupied attachment than children in either lesbian mother or heterosexual parent families, and lower levels of disorganised attachment than children in heterosexual parent families. The positive findings regarding child attachment security in gay father families are perhaps unsurprising, as this sample of gay father families showed more positive parental mental health, parenting quality and child adjustment than heterosexual parent families at the first phase of the study (Golombok et al., 2014). As little was known about adoption by gay fathers at the time parents adopted, it is possible that the adoption process may have been especially stringent for gay men meaning that those who realised their dreams of becoming adoptive parents were an especially motivated and well-adjusted group. The findings of this study are in line with the growing evidence that gay men make capable parents and that men are suitable primary attachment figures

Mental Health of Adult Offspring of Lesbian Parents

It is well documented that children and adolescents with lesbian parents are at least as well adjusted as their peers with heterosexual parents. However, as the peak incidence of many psychiatric disorders is during early adulthood (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) opponents of same-sex parenting may argue that the harmful effects of being raised by lesbian mothers go undetected throughout childhood and arise in early adulthood. Therefore, research focusing on the psychological wellbeing of adult offspring of lesbian parents is particularly valuable.

The National Longitudinal Lesbian Family Study (NLLFS) is a prospective longitudinal study that has followed a cohort of children with lesbian mothers from conception (using donor-insemination) to adulthood and has a 92% retention rate. At the sixth wave of the study, the mental health of 77 adult offspring (aged 25) was assessed using the Achenbach Adult Self-Report. As compared to a normative sample of persons (matched for age, sex, ethnicity, and educational level) the NLLFS sample showed no significant differences in behavioural or emotional problems, or in scores on mental health diagnostic scales. Notably there were also no significant differences between the NLLFS sample and the matched Achenbach normative sample on any of the adaptive functioning outcomes, including relationships with family, friends and partners, as well as educational or job performance.

The predictors of mental health in this sample of adult offspring with Lesbian parents were also examined (Koh, Bos, & Gartrell, 2019). Cross-sectional analyses were used to determine whether mental health was associated with personal and family characteristics, the quality of their important relationships and features unique to the offspring of same-sex parents, such as homophobic stigmatization. In general, the predictors of mental health for the adult offspring of lesbian mothers were similar to those found in the general population. Specifically, level of education, having an intimate relationship and the quality of relationships with intimate partner, friends and parents predicted the mental health of emerging adults with lesbian parents. However, adults who reported homophobic stigmatization due to their parents' sexuality reported higher levels of behavioural and emotional problems than those who did not. The authors highlight that future research is needed to understand whether societal changes in the acceptance of same-sex parents have positive consequences for the wellbeing of children raised by same-sex parents.



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Special Thanks

To all the people who are actively involved in bringing visibility to the diversity of family forms in society, to all who are prepared to stand up for the rights of every one of these diverse families.

To the over 650 volunteers who were involved in the organization of the various events all over the globe and the IFED Board, IFED Steering Committee and IFED Team for the tremendous work.

The printing of this report has been possible thanks to the generous donations of Sateenkaariperheet (Finnish Rainbow Families Association), Dachverband Regenbogenfamilien (Swiss Rainbow Families Association), Véronique Rey, Céline Martin.

Photo credits: courtesy of the World Policy Analysis Center (p.22), Benjamin Strike (p. 1, 44, 49, 57, 59), Cuba Oliveira Photography (4, 10, 32, 44, 51).