



The official newsletter of Parents & Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays

Spring 2012

Parent Talk

Get on Track

Years ago when I became the executive director of PFOX I set two goals:

First, to make the public aware that we always unconditionally love our children and we work at never causing them to doubt that love; and

Second, to provide support for families who have a homosexual loved one, provide information that changing sexual orientation is possible, not easy nor guaranteed, for those with unwanted same-sex attractions (SSAs).

I had such hopes. I believed PFOX families could reach out to the homosexual community through our blended families, composed of homosexuals, former homosexuals and heterosexuals. PFOX sought to establish an inclusive and diverse community. Through education about sexual orientation and ex-gays, I believed we could provide a safe and loving environment for all children regardless of their sexual orientation.

Sexuality is a very important part of our life but it should not define who we are as a person; it is merely a reflection of our feelings and attractions.

PFOX has developed resources for families for more than a decade which is a vital part of our work today. We seek to equip parents, friends, churches and schools with information

to help them better understand some of the possible causes of SSAs. PFOX spoke at schools throughout Virginia and in 2002 began our outreach in Montgomery County, Md.

Children who have unwanted SSAs - and those who support them - have a right to know that current science and mainstream psychological organizations say they're unable to state whether homosexuality is innate, genetic or in your DNA. Read the latest on the identical twin studies and other studies at www.mygenes.co.nz.

Current sexual orientation non-discrimination laws and policies do not provide protection to ex-gays and their supporters. Thus gay anti-PFOX and anti-ex-gay organizations are exempt from accountability, allowing them to discriminate and promote hatred of the ex-gay community and PFOX.

Today children in Montgomery County are being exposed to discrimination and taught to oppose PFOX and ex-gays - encouraged by counselors, teachers, staff and Superintendent of Montgomery County Schools Joshua Starr.

Listen to a Poolsville high-school counselor message left on the PFOX voicemail at <http://pfox.org/PFOX-voicemail-counselor.mp3>.

PFOX sought to bring a message of hope to all children. We wanted to

provide support and equality for all students - gays, ex-gays and students with unwanted SSAs - through the schools' backpack flier program. Schools are already educating children about homosexuality so adding information about SSAs and former homosexuals would promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and support for all students.

On page 2 of this newsletter you can view the PFOX flier, also available for download at www.pfox.org.

View a video of Superintendent Starr's statement to students at Wootton High School about the PFOX flier at <http://youtube.com/KQurGgAtc48>. Starr discusses the possibility of canceling all nonprofit back pack fliers to stop the PFOX flier. Starr's personal and biased comments to the students promote viewpoint discrimination against ex-gays and PFOX to students, based on his personal beliefs.

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www.pfox.org ~ pfox@pfox.org ~ 804-453-4737

Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays (PFOX) promotes diversity for the ex-gay community. Ex-gays demonstrate that those with unwanted same-sex attractions can seek help and information on overcoming their feelings. All individuals deserve the right to self-determination and happiness based on their own needs, and not the needs of others. PFOX supports tolerance.

PFOX can provide: resources for parents and students, ex-gay speakers for your school or club, books for your school library, and brochures on same-sex attractions, bullying and tolerance.

Who are ex-gays?

Every year thousands of people with unwanted same-sex attractions make the personal decision to leave a gay identity through non-judgmental environments or their own initiative. Their decision is one only they can make. However, there are those in society who refuse to respect an individual's right to self-determination. Consequently, formerly gay men and women are discriminated against simply because they dare to exist. Ex-gays and their supporters are denied equal access and support, forcing them to remain silent for fear of negative reactions and disapproval.

But aren't some people born "gay"?

According to mainstream psychological associations, there are no replicated scientific studies to support that a person can be born "gay." No "gay gene" or gay center of the brain has been found. No medical test exists to determine if a person is homosexual. Sexual orientation is based on feelings and is a matter of self-affirmation and public declaration. Some teens are labeled "gay" or other names even though they do not have same-sex attractions. Appearance is not a reliable means to know what another person feels. No one should be labeled based on the perception of others. Name calling is wrong because the victim may begin to believe what others tell them about themselves, which may be completely false labeling and cause gender confusion.

If only one part of you has gay feelings, should your whole life be gay identified?

Many people would agree that just because one part of you feels a certain way, it doesn't mean your entire identity is that way. Having feelings of same-sex attraction may make you feel different. We all feel the need to fit in and be accepted. But no one should identify themselves based on sexual feelings alone. There is more to your identity than your sexual attractions. Thousands of ex-gay men and women had those very same feelings when they were in school. Get smart! Explore the origins of your same-sex attraction. Why do I have these feelings? Where did they come from? The decision of a prom date, a car, or whether to super-size those fries can be based on a feeling, but important decisions should not be made on feelings alone. In order to make an educated decision, you have to be informed! Sexuality develops over time. It isn't necessary to label yourself today.

Find out more at www.pfox.org !!!

(These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Board of Education of Montgomery County, the superintendent, or this school.)

Speech ... Speech!

Testimony before Montgomery County (MD) Board of Education

By PETER SPRIGG

Resident, Montgomery County
Member, Board of Directors, Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays (PFOX)
Re: Policy CNA and Regulation CNA-RA ("backpack fliers")
February 27, 2012

Recently, controversy has again arisen regarding fliers from Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays (PFOX) that were distributed in several high schools. The flier states, "Every year thousands of people with unwanted same-sex attractions make the personal decision to leave a gay identity," and asserts that such people should be able to "seek help and information on overcoming their feelings."

The most defamatory accusation about the PFOX flier is that it is "anti-gay." The flier included statements such as, "All individuals deserve the right to self-determination and happiness based on their own needs, and not the needs of others." "All individuals" means all individuals—gay and ex-gay. The flier also declares, "PFOX supports tolerance." That means tolerance for all—gays and

ex-gays. Yet apparently for some people, "tolerance" is a one-way street.

The flier does openly criticize some behavior—namely, "labeling" and "name-calling." Discrimination based on a person's perceived sexual orientation is one of the things forbidden in many "non-discrimination" codes. Surely opposition to name-calling and labeling should be a source of common ground, not of division.

PFOX has learned that some teachers refused to distribute the fliers, thus violating our rights as established by not one but two federal court decisions. I urge the Board to obey the law by instructing all MCPS faculty and staff that the fliers must be distributed, and by disciplining

those who refuse.

Now, some are urging that you abolish the backpack flier program altogether—

potentially punishing every non-profit organization in the county simply to censor one message of freedom and self-determination for all.

That, ladies and gentlemen, would be

"PFOX supports tolerance." That means tolerance for all—gays and ex-gays. Yet apparently for some people, "tolerance" is a one-way street.

Peter Sprigg

"reprehensible," "deplorable," and "disgusting."

Peter Sprigg is a resident of Montgomery County and serves on the Board of Directors of PFOX. He was a member of the MCPS Citizens Advisory Committee for Family Life and Human Development for six years (2005-2011).

Speech before the Montgomery County (Md.) Board of Education

I am Grace Harley, speaking for Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays, known as PFOX, a non-profit organization that works to eliminate negative perceptions and discrimination against former homosexuals.

I lived for 18 years as a transgendered man called "Joe." During that time, I was involved in same-sex relationships. But now I am a member of the ex-gay community for over 19 years.

I am sad that Superintendent Joshua Starr has called me and other ex-

gays names like "deplorable" and "disgusting." What saddens me more is that you, the Board of Education, have not reprimanded Superintendent Starr. If he had said the same things about gays,

you would have fired him by now. But because he hates people like me, you support him.

I have suffered more discrimination and intolerance as an ex-gay than I ever did when I was

gay. Please stop hating us. Follow your own Non-Discrimination Policy. You and the superintendent are role models

for children in the Montgomery County Public Schools. If you stop hating former homosexuals, our students will not learn to hate either.

We absolutely need diversity training in our schools on tolerance for the ex-gay community. Teachers, principals, and Superintendent Starr cannot be allowed to use their official position to display hate against any group of people. Our schools must provide equal access.

I am submitting a newspaper editorial written by a student at Walter Johnson High School. She says, "We cannot call ourselves tolerant while sealing off our schools from groups that we disagree with... We cannot make the right decisions unless we hear all sides of the story." Let's learn from our students. Thank you.

I have suffered more discrimination and intolerance as an ex-gay than I ever did when I was gay.

Grace Harley,
former transgender

Donate online at <http://pfox.org/donate.html>

Dear Friends:

I'm emailing to urge you to join me for the Awakening 2012 at Calvary Assembly of God in Winter Park, Florida on April 20-21. This event will provide an opportunity for Christians of all denominations to come together in support of returning biblical principles to our dying culture. The theme of this transformative event is "turning our voices into votes." Now, more than ever, we need to not only make our voices heard on the issues that we care about, but we also need to take action to inspire true "hope" and "change".

The schedule for this event features superb panels which will cover topics from Israel to immigration as well as tremendous speakers who will educate and inspire those who attend with the goal of launching a new revolution in our nation.

Speakers will include former Presidential candidate Herman Cain, myself, and more than 60 national religious and civic leaders.

This will also provide a great opportunity for you to meet and interact with others who care about the future of this country and want to make a difference in America this election season. I know that if you attend this event, you will leave encouraged and equipped to carry out the important task of advancing righteousness and justice in the United States of America. Get your tickets today at www.TheAwakening2012.org.

In Him,

J. Matt Barber

Vice President

Liberty Counsel Action



Current address

Please note our address: PFOX, PO Box 510, Reedville VA 22539. You can also reach us by telephone at 804-453-4737. Thank you.

Family and Friends Prayer List

Mary Beth, Tom, Sean, Stan, Christopher, Lucas, Beth, Elaine, Joshua, Benjamin, Hampton, Cheryl, Stacy, Carol, Mattie, Nicole, David, Bob, Rose, Steve, Ronald, James, Madeline, Jesus, Rick, Gary, April, Maureen, Jen, Michael, Eric, Allen, Sara,

Damon, Sam, Matthew, Deborah, Corey, James, Jeffery, Melanie, Stan, Brooke, Lisa, Emily, Tyler, Jim, Chad, Brett, Charles, Brian, Jerome, Pamela, Kelly, Tim, Roger, Gaetano, Christian, Judy, Michael, Monte, Gary, Karen, Hillary, Stephan, Brooke, Terri, Elise, Joseph, Vickie, Tricia, Paul,

Tobby, Sandy, Brian, Larry, Alan, Christian Tom, Delores, Mark, Tara, Angela, Jessica, Dawn, Alicia, Jason, Frank, Paul, Edward, Maria, Mario, Michelle, Connor, Angela, Carl Jr., Marcus, Brandon, Gaylon,

Edmond, Keshia, Shannon, Paige, Melissa, Donny, William, Wendall, Leno, Mandy, Andy, E., Erik, Lauren, Chris, Todd, Jayson, Carl III, Steve, Zachary, Kelly, Toby, Cody, Dylan, Wayne, Tom, Jeff, Walt, Cayce, Tim,

David, Charles, Edward, Matt, Marc, Heather, Gary, Bill, John, Jeremy, Jen R, Cindy, Karen, Brian, Shellie, Pattie, Emily, Carrie, Alicia, Michelle, Bruce, Rebecca, Suhmin, Phil, Bryce,

Ethan, Doug, Tom, Nick, Harold, Kent, Glenn, Rob and Heath, Angela, Julia, Wess, Christine, Catherine, Jeremy, Katie, David, Troy, Mike, Lisa, Bruce, James, Mary, Samantha, Victoria and Buddy, Christopher A., Jeramie C., Adam C., Christopher K., Perry N., Eric, Missy, Nathan, Michelle, Joe and Idario, Miranda Marie, Sarah.

On Track continued from page 1

Please read testimonies on page 3 by Peter Sprigg and Grace Harley, presented to the Montgomery County school board in response to comments made by Starr to students at Wooten High school.

How must a child with an unwanted SSA feel when he or she sees this type of hostility towards ex-gays and PFOX? Where's their safe zone? It should be through a trusted adult who will provide them resources where they can obtain help for their unwanted SSAs.

My children are adults now. I do, however, have grandchildren, nieces

and nephews who are in public schools. I care very much about what is being taught to children. They are our future and our hope to carry on our belief systems.

We ask you to please join us in the battle to save our schools and the children. PFOX cannot make a difference unless you support us: financially and by showing up and speaking up. All students deserve respect.

Please get on the PFOX train. Donate so that PFOX can continue moving down the track for equality and truth.

Regina

Donate online at <http://pfox.org/donate.html>