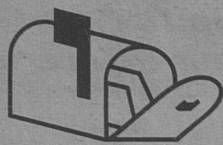


letters



OITM, PO Box 1078, Richmond, VT 05477-1078 or Editor@mountainpridemedi.org

*Out in the Mountains* welcomes your letters. Although we will withhold names from printing upon request, the letter must be accompanied by a verifiable name and address in order to be considered for publication. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. Letters are also subject to the editorial policy stated in the masthead.

Outright Vermont Correction

Recently, the State Department of Education moved a \$12,000 grant from Outright Vermont's school-based programs to the Department's Safe and Healthy School's Division. Along with this move of financial resources, implications have been made that Outright is no longer conducting workshops and trainings for school staff, faculty, and students on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity.

**Our Safe Schools Program still exists.** We will continue to do programs in Vermont schools on the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth. More than ever, our work with the staff, faculty, and students of Vermont's schools is critical to creating a safer and more positive learn-

ing environment for all students.

This past year, we have seen a rise in anti-gay related incidents in schools. More students are being harassed more openly. Teachers are also finding themselves targets of homophobic slurs and harassment. We know this because we hear from the youth in your schools every week at our drop-in and at our support groups. Teachers have even become the focus of harassment because they tried to stop some of the anti-gay slurs flying around in their classes and hallways.

We know this is not the type of atmosphere you want present in your schools and communities. We have spent eleven years supporting gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth who felt isolated, harassed, and even persecuted in their own schools and communities. We desperately need to continue this work: it is good work and

it saves lives! That is why Outright Vermont was created and that is why we still exist today.

To that end, we pledge to continue our Safe Schools Program. We will provide as many staff and faculty trainings and classroom presentations as our staff and resources will allow. We will continue to be a safe harbor for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth and for all youth who desire to see an end of homophobia in our society. We will continue to be a stalwart supporter of all those educators who are also working to end homophobia in their schools and in their communities.

If you have any questions about our programs, or you wish to schedule a staff/faculty training or general presentation at your school, organization or place of employment, please do not hesitate to contact us at 1-800-GLB-CHAT (452-2428) or info@outrightvt.org.

Sue Wilson  
Educational Development Coordinator

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OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS

established in 1986

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of *Out in the Mountains* is to serve as a voice for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered people, and our supporters in Vermont. We wish the newspaper to be a source of information, insight, and affirmation. We also see OITM as a vehicle for the celebration of the culture and diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities here in Vermont and elsewhere.

EDITORIAL POLICY

We will consider for publication any material which broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and of each other. Views and opinions appearing in the paper do not necessarily represent those of *Out in the Mountains*. This paper cannot and will not endorse any candidates or actions of public officials on issues of importance to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered persons. We reserve the right not to publish any material deemed to be overtly racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, ageist, classist, xenophobic, or homophobic.

Writers' guidelines are available on request. All materials submitted must include a name and a contact number. However, within the pages of the newspaper, articles may appear anonymously upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed.

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