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P R O G E N Y

Progeny Goes to Daycare

by Barbara Dozetos



Just a few months ago I wrote here about "Progeny's" birth. Since then, it has not only taken its first steps, but learned to speak.

This past summer OITM did a survey that revealed that more than one third of our readers have kids. I'm delighted to have help give a voice to the parents, children, and families in our community and I'm pleased that this column has been so well received.

In light of my new responsibilities at *Out In The Mountains*, I guess it's time for "Progeny" to go to daycare.

I will be asking different people to write "Progeny" from month to month. Some will be professional with lots of letters after their names, others will be queer parents with stories to tell and opinions to share.

Don't wait to be asked. If you have something you'd like to say or someone you'd like to hear from, speak up.

PANEL DISCUSSION AT VCLGR CONFERENCE

The other day a co-worker told me that her sister and her partner have two children, both products of alternative insemination and born during this relationship.

If these kids don't have two mommies, nobody does. The oldest of the children is 10 and the couple still refuses to have The Talk with them. My friend is concerned for her nephews and worried about the emotional stress this puts on them and I agree.

Sadly, this probably isn't an uncommon family situation. In fact, many of us have basic questions about the best way to talk to our children about our queer lives. Exactly how do we tell them? How much do they understand? Is there a right age? How much do we include them in our social lives? Should we be concerned when they spend time at a picnic playing "Name That Broadway Musical" with Vermont's most famous drag queen? And where do we find a forum to talk about these issues with each other?

NAMEDROPPER!

I can provide an answer to that last question. The Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights is holding its annual conference at UVM on Oct. 10, and they've graciously agreed to let me lead one of the afternoon workshops. "Sharing Our Pride with Our Kids" will be a panel discussion, so bring your thoughts and questions. We will explore the pros, cons, whys, wherefores, and even hows of being out to our kids.

Joining me on the panel will be Richard Recchio, a pediatrician with a practice in Milton. When the idea for this panel was forming, Rick was one of the first people I thought to include. A few months ago I heard him tell a story about

one of his patients coming to him to ask questions about sexuality that the boy just couldn't ask his parents. The compassion in Rick's handling of the situation was striking. His insight into how kids think and what they need from the significant adults in their lives makes him an ideal contributor to this conversation.

Jackie Weinstock, psychologist, writer, professor, and all-round great person will complete the panel. Jackie's bio and CV could fill this paper. If you aren't familiar with her work or with her personally, you should be. With Esther Rothblum, she wrote *Lesbian Friendships: For Ourselves and Each Other* and also co-authored *A Tradition That Has No Name: Nurturing the Development of People, Families, and Communities*. She is currently writing about and studying the children of GLBT parents.

That's it; a panel of three. You don't need my credentials. You know me, just a lesbian with a daughter named Courtney who is surely grateful that I'm not going to be writing a column about parenting anymore. The fine folks at VCLGR are once again providing child care, so there's no excuse to miss this chance to mingle with and learn from our community. See you at the conference, and in the editorial pages!

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