

## Statement of Purpose

### TO HELP CHANGE ATTITUDES:

While society surrounds us with misinformation about homosexuality, we must not allow these distorted attitudes to go unchallenged or continue to interfere with the happiness of families and their relationships with gay family members. We want to help society recognize that our loved ones as homosexual people are normal, healthy, productive, and loving beings.

### TO HELP PARENTS AND FAMILIES

We know how they feel because we felt the same way. We want to help our gay family members on the journey toward acceptance, respect and pride.

### TO EDUCATE:

We challenge the problem of silence. In America today there are millions of parents with gay daughters and sons who are victims of social, political and economic oppression. Gay people in many communities are still obstructed by prejudice in their pursuit of happiness and in striving to live their lives with openness and dignity. Homosexuals are not the only victims of this oppression; it also touches their friends and families. We, as Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gay Men feel that the time is right to join together to appeal to the public conscience in order to achieve equal opportunities for our daughters and sons. We challenge society's status quo attitude. We have a commitment to actively help our gay daughters, sons, and friends by working for the same basic human rights, liberties, and opportunities for them that are enjoyed by our straight children and friends. As friends and parents of gay people, new windows of understanding have been opened to us that have enriched our lives. We want to bring this understanding to the community.

## Our Meetings & Contact Information

The Anderson-Clemson Chapter PFLAG meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month. All meetings are confidential. For meeting location, please call: 864-654-5959 (days) or Contact the Anderson-Clemson Chapter HELPLINE (864.944.8620) or email at [pflag-andersonclemson@pflagupstatesc.org](mailto:pflag-andersonclemson@pflagupstatesc.org)

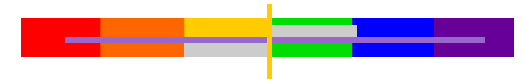
The Greenville PFLAG meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month. All meetings are confidential. For meeting place or further information, please contact us at our help-line (864-232-2988) or via email at [pflag-greenville@pflagupstatesc.org](mailto:pflag-greenville@pflagupstatesc.org)

The Spartanburg Chapter PFLAG meetings are held the first Thursday of each month. All meetings are confidential. For meeting location, please call: 864-574-1253 (**before 10:00 PM**) or email at [Pflag-spartanburg@pflagupstatesc.org](mailto:Pflag-spartanburg@pflagupstatesc.org)



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# PFLAG

## Upstate South Carolina

Support

Education

Advocacy



**Anderson/Clemson:** 864.944.8620

**Greenville:** 864-232-2988

**Spartanburg:** 864-574-1253

**Web site:** [www.pflagupstatesc.org](http://www.pflagupstatesc.org)





## OUR MISSION:

To promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, and friends through:

**Support** -- to cope with an adverse society,

**Education** -- to inform and enlighten the public, and

**Advocacy** -- to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG, a non-profit organization, provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.



### WE HAVE LEARNED ...

Our lesbian and gay loved ones come from all walks of life, including "model" families, single parents, dominant or submissive mothers, weak or strong fathers -- there is no pattern!

### WE HAVE LEARNED ...

To be free from the burden of guilt about our loved one's natural, normal sexual orientation. No one knows what causes homosexuality, just as no one knows what causes heterosexuality. It's nobody's fault!

### WE HAVE LEARNED ...

Our homosexual loved ones may be an only child, the youngest or oldest, or one (or both) of twins. In some families one child is homosexual; in others, two or more.

### WE HAVE LEARNED ...

**IT JUST IS!**

## What Do We Do?

We are committed to help other parents, families, and friends learn what we have learned. We hope to change attitudes and create an environment of understanding so that our gay and lesbian children can live with dignity and respect and total acceptance of who they are. It is our sincere invitation to share our knowledge, to be free from fear, and to reach out, search, and discover more about being human. We do this with sensitivity, trust, and an environment of love.

### WE LISTEN:

We listen in confidence to family members who are troubled by a loved one's coming out, and who don't know how to cope.

### WE LEARN:

We learn from speakers who come to our meetings and teach us skills we can use to help ourselves and others understand sexual diversity.

### WE SHARE:

We share our stories and our concerns. We talk with people who have "been there" and who might help others on their journey to loving and accepting a gay family member or friend.

### WE ACT:

We act on any issue that touches on the support of our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender loved ones.



## History

In 1972, Jeanne Manford made history when she marched alongside her gay son Morty at New York City's Gay Pride Parade, carrying a sign that said, "We Love Our Gay Children." Lesbian and gay people showered her with hugs and tears, and begged her to talk to their parents. Jeanne got the idea to start a parents group, where parents could meet and talk and know they were not alone. A safe and non-judgmental place where they could begin to understand that nothing was wrong with their kids.

Jeanne formed a small New York City group, and subsequently helped Adele and Larry Starr, who also had a gay son, create a Los Angeles group. Adele Starr would eventually go on to become PFLAG's first national president. In 1979, the handful of support groups around the country met in Washington, D.C., to coincide with the first national march for gay rights. Two years later, PFLAG was officially formed.

PFLAG has remained the definitive support system for many parents learning to understand their gay and lesbian children. But PFLAG has become more than a support organization for parents of gay children. In the true tradition of Jeanne Manford's historic public support of her son Morty and her desire to speak out on his behalf, PFLAG's role as educators and advocates continues to evolve. As educators of a society still ignorant to the facts of homosexuality, PFLAG members are knowledgeable and credible sources of information about homosexuality and issues related to their gay, lesbian or bisexual friends and family members. As advocates for equal rights for their gay, lesbian and bisexual family members and friends, PFLAG members are respected and reasoned voices that political, religious and media decision makers listen to.

More than 30 years ago, Jeanne Manford took an unprecedented stand for her gay son; and thanks to her fortitude, courage and vision, her dream of PFLAG became a reality. Today, PFLAG addresses the needs of members at many different stages of their personal journeys through the organization's support programs, educational projects and advocacy activities. PFLAG has helped hundreds of family members and friends of lesbian, gay and bisexual people take Jeanne Manford's example. They've taken their own stands.