

# Resources for Gay and Lesbian Families and Students

Sarah Childers and Afriyie Daniels, Indiana

Just a couple of weeks ago, I found myself in one of the most anticipated and/or dreaded moments of parenthood - the big question. My son, a very scientific-minded young man at the ripe old age of seven, turned to me as we scrambled eggs one morning and asked me why there were no baby chickens in the eggs. Thus began "the talk" on fertilization and (heterosexual) intercourse. He handled it very well, and, as is his wont, with flair. "Mom," he said, "I always say 'expect the unexpected,' because that is just *weird!*" Not long after this, he asked me what "gay" meant. As a student at Harmony School, he's probably more exposed to gay families than his contemporaries in more traditional schools, so he didn't balk at my explanation in the slightest. For a second grader, it seems the concept of two people who love each other and are of the same gender is much more reasonable than explanations of the strange and murky operations of sexual reproduction.

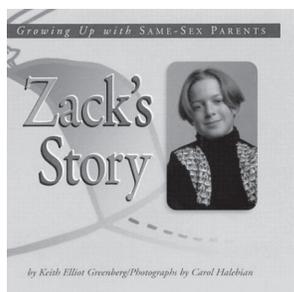
For me, this experience reinforces my suspicion that children are not only capable of, but better at accepting differences than most adults are when they have the chance to discuss differences openly with a trusted adult. Opportunities to have these conversations may arise and any point during a student's life. Afriyie Daniels, a work-study employee of the NSRF National Center and a brilliant woman, has compiled a list of resources about sexual orientation, specifically those that involve children in families with gay/lesbian parents, for use in your conversations with students of a wide range of ages.

- Sarah Childers

## *Zack's Story: Growing Up with Same-Sex Parents*

by Keith Elliot Greenberg

*Growing Up with Same-Sex Parents* is told through the eyes of an eleven-year-old boy named Zack. He lives in New Jersey, with his mom and her partner Margie, whom Zack calls his second mother. According to Zack, "sometimes kids say really mean things about gay people, and I know that some kids think that having lesbian mothers is strange. But I think we live the way every family does. When I'm not in school, I play baseball, go



on picnics, and go in-line skating." Zack's story continues by giving detailed descriptions of both of his moms' roles in his life and the valued time that they spend together.

*Daddy and Papa: A Story about Gay Fathers in America* a documentary film by Johnny Symons



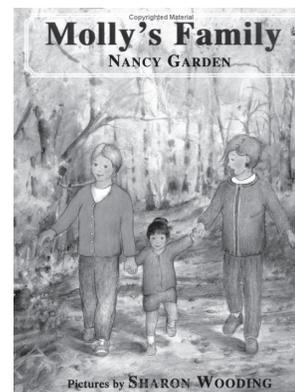
"*Daddy and Papa* explores the growing phenomenon of gay fatherhood and its impact on American culture. Through the stories of four different families, *Daddy and Papa* delves into some of the particular challenges facing gay men who decide to become dads."

"From surrogacy, foster care, and interracial adoption, to the complexities of gay marriage and divorce, to the battle for full legal status as parents, *Daddy and Papa* presents a revealing look at some of the gay fathers who are breaking new ground in the ever-changing landscape of the American family." - from [DaddyandPapa.com](http://DaddyandPapa.com)

[DaddyandPapa.com](http://DaddyandPapa.com) also offers an extensive resource listing for would-be adoptive parents, as well as a discussion guide for teachers using *Daddy and Papa* in the classroom.

## *Molly's Family* by Nancy Garden

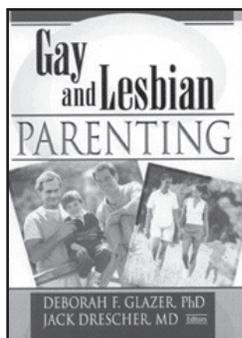
"The members of Ms. Marston's kindergarten class are busily cleaning and decorating their room for the upcoming Open School Night, when everybody's family is invited to visit. Molly and Stephen and Tanya and Tommy work on drawing pictures to put on the walls. Molly draws her family: Mommy, Mama Lu, and her puppy, Sam. But when Tommy looks at her picture, he tells her it's not of a family. "You can't have a mommy and a momma," he says. Molly doesn't know what to think; no one else in her class has two mothers. She isn't sure she wants her picture to be on the wall for Open School



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Night. But after talking to Mommy, Mama Lu, and Ms. Marston, Molly does some hard thinking and realizes that even if a family is different from others, it can still be a happy, loving - and real - family."

-Molly's Family



*Gay and Lesbian Parenting* by Deborah F. Glazer, PhD and Jack Drescher, MD (editors)

"Traditionally, coming out as gay or lesbian meant abandoning any hope of becoming a parent or keeping your children if you already had them. But with the "gayby boom" in full

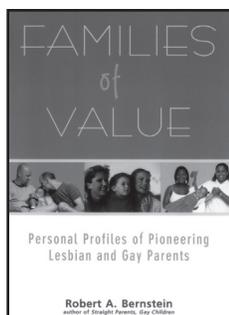
swing, more and more gay and lesbian couples are having new babies, adopting children, and continuing to raise the offspring of previous heterosexual relationships.

"Gay and lesbian parents still face unique challenges in building and rearing a family, as well as the usual problems heterosexual couples encounter. *Gay and Lesbian Parenting* unflinchingly examines these concerns and offers positive suggestions and ideas for dealing with these difficulties." - *Gay and Lesbian Parenting*

*Families of Value: Personal Profiles of Pioneering Lesbian and Gay Parents* by Robert A. Bernstein

Bernstein has compiled various stories about GLBT families and their quest to exist in a heterosexual world. "*Families of Value* offers a positive portrayal of GLBT/LGBT parents who are at the forefront of social change in America. By turns hard-hitting and affecting, these stories portray the resistance these brave parents have faced, their views of the current cultural climate, and, most importantly, the intense passion and dedication that they have demonstrated in the course of raising sound, healthy, and well adjusted children."

- *Families of Value*



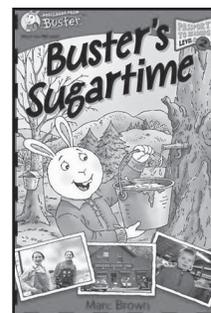
*Letters To Our Children: Lesbian and Gay Adults Speak to the New Generation*

Compiled and Edited by Larry Dane Brimner

The author has compiled essays by writers of wide-ranging experiences and viewpoints to give the next generation of out homosexuals a chance to hear and a chance to socialize with gay and lesbian elders. The letters offer solutions, wisdom, and experience learned from those who have gone before.

*Postcards from Buster*

Buster Baxter is the infamous cartoon rabbit who stirred up so much controversy in 2005 for an episode of his show, *Postcards from Buster*, in which he visited a family with lesbian moms. Episode number 133, entitled *Sugartime!*, is about Buster's trip to Vermont (one of the first states to legalize civil unions) during the maple syrup harvest. *Sugartime!* came under heavy criticism by then - U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, claiming that "many parents would not want their young children exposed to the lifestyles portrayed in this episode." In fact, the episode deals with the issue very naturally and simply, which suits the intended audience, young children, well. The words "lesbian" and "homosexual" are never used in the episode, and there is no complicated explanation of the family's composition - just the statement of one child in the family, "I have two moms." However, the controversy was so intense that PBS was forced to pull the episode. *Sugartime!* will never appear on PBS again (unless policy changes), but it is available on the VHS/DVD collection of *Postcards from Buster* entitled *Buster's Outdoor Journeys*. A book adaptation of the episode, entitled *Buster's Sugartime!*, by Marc Brown, is also available.



If you are interested in ordering any of these books, please use NSRF's Amazon.com Associates program and up to four percent of your purchase will be donated to NSRF. Just follow the link from our website, [www.nsrffharmony.org](http://www.nsrffharmony.org)! ■

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