For 29 years, uniting, empowering, and supporting youth in LGBTQIA+ families. COLAGE is for us and by us.
Who We Are

Top left to right: Kaley Fry, Jamie Bergeron, Amanda Barry Moilanen, COLAGE volunteers and ambassadors, and Emily McGranachan.
Who is COLAGE for?
COLAGE programming unites people with one or more lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and/or asexual parents/caregivers into a network of peers and supports them as they nurture and empower each other to be skilled, self-confident, and just leaders in our collective communities.
COLAGE as a stand alone organization was started in 1990 by a group of youth who had LGBTQIA+ parents and saw a need for a space where they could talk about their own experiences and create community through developing safe and empowering spaces. We are now a program of Family Equality.
Our Living Language Basics

- **COLAGEr/Queerspawn/Gayby/Queer 2.0**: A person with one or more LGBTQIA+ parent or caregiver.
- **GOLAGEr**: A person with a LGBTQIA+ grandparent.
- **Bothie**: “Refers to someone who was born or adopted into a heterosexual relationship and whose parents later both came out as LGBTQIA+ or applies to instances where LGBTQIA+ people came together to create their own families, such as a lesbian couple and a gay male friend who decided to conceive together.”
- **Second Generation**: A person who is LGBTQIA+ and has at least one LGBTQIA+ parent or caregiver.
- **PTP/KOT/Transpawn**: A person with one or more transgender parent or caregiver.
- **Culturally Queer**: “Speaks to the feeling shared by many adults with LGBTQIA+ parents that they grew up immersed in queer culture, including traditions, celebrations, media, and language.” - Queerspawn Resource Project Guide
Total # of community members served in 2018: 2,286
Average annual reach: 2,190

COLAGErs Reached in 2018

New: 45.8%
Returning: 54.2%

Familyequality.org/colage
“So...What exactly does COLAGE programming do or offer?”
Family Week: The largest annual gathering of LGBTQIA+ families in the world! About 2,000 people attended in 2019.
www.ptownfamilyweek.com
Demographics: Families traveled from 31 states and 12 international cities in Europe and Australia to come to Family Week. The highest concentration of attendees came from Massachusetts and the New England area.
Why COLAGE?
The Impact of COLAGE
Why COLAGE?

86% of youth ages 11-19 self-reported that after attending COLAGE programs, they have a greater sense of self and are able to enhance their knowledge of personal identity and shared community language.

61% of youth ages 8-18 self-reported a history of not feeling safe or comfortable telling people about their LGBTQIA+ family.

71% of youth ages 8-18 self-reported that they have been bullied because of their LGBTQIA+ family.

COLAGE
SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN LGBTQIA+ FAMILIES FOR OVER 25 YEARS

Familyequality.org/colage
How can youth get involved?
Virtual Communities

For ages 13+

- Facebook.com/colage
- COLAGE Family
- COLAGE Parent & Guardian Network
- Outspoken COLAGErs
- A closed group for people with a transgender parent
  - facebook.com/KaleyatCOLAGE

Familyequality.org/colage
Events and Gatherings

Examples from 2019

January:
LGBTQIA+ Family Gathering at Creating Change in Detroit

May:
IFED in Columbus, Ohio

July:
Family Week in Provincetown, MA

October:
COLAGE at Philly Family Pride Conference
Family Week: Ptownfamilyweek.com
# Youth and Adult Leadership Track

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Entry Level</td>
<td>FOR ALL AGES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>AGES 13+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>AGES 18+</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>AGES 18+</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>AGES 18+</td>
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- **Level 1 (Entry Level)**
  - Attend COLAGE programming in-person or virtually

- **Level 2 (Ages 13+)**
  - Youth Action Board
  - Facilitator in Training
  - General Ambassador

- **Level 3 (Ages 18+)**
  - COLAGE Intern
  - Program Facilitator
  - Advanced Ambassador

- **Level 4 (Ages 18+)**
  - Year-Long Fellow
  - Contract Position
  - Part-Time Position

- **Level 5 (Ages 18+)**
  - Full-Time COLAGE Staff
  - COLAGE Action Board
  - Leadership Committees
COLAGE
Community
Culture
What is it like for youth to grow up within a LGBTQ+ family?
Personal stories and experiences that are not always shared outside of COLAGEr-only spaces

Experiences queerspawn might be bringing with them into the space:

- Bullying from being in a LGBTQ+ family and too scared to share with parent(s)
- Being told their family is not real - illegitimate. “You have to have a mom! Everyone has a mom!”
- Queerspawn as young as 7 are asked how their parents have sex
- Queerspawn teased about being LGBTQ+ like their parents from a young age
- Queerspawn are ostracized at GSA’s because they are culturally queer and not 2nd gen
- Queerspawn questioning their place in LGBTQIA+ spaces and even within the acronym
- PTP struggling with their own internalized transphobia as their parent comes out
- Adopted queerspawn scared to talk to their parents about finding their biological parents
- Queerspawn of color experiencing discrimination and scared or unsure of how to talk to their white parent(s) about it
- The joys of being raised in a LGBTQ+ family
  - Having your first favorite song be a queer staple - Melissa Etheridge, Cher, etc
  - Queerspawn of gay dads showing queerspawn with lesbian moms how to iron fancy clothes
  - Attending Pride celebrations and drag shows since birth
  - Learning how to ignore or stand up to gay protestors at events / how to stay strong in the face of adversity and discrimination
  - Learning how to build non-biological family from friends and neighbors when needed
  - Creating unique traditions for Mothers’ day, fathers’ day, trans parent day, and pride festivals.

Familyequality.org/colage
What are some stories you have heard or experienced, from the viewpoint of a child within a LGBTQ+ family?
Questions we have received from parents/caregivers or people who do not have LGBTQ+ parents/caregivers...

- “Why do youth need COLAGEr-ONLY Space?”
- “My kids don’t need COLAGE. We live in a liberal community. We have lots of friends with families like ours”
- “Do all youth in LGBTQ+ families belong in LGBTQ+ spaces?”
- “Is the word ‘Queerspawn’ offensive? I don’t like it!”
- “Don’t GSA’s already support Queerspawn?”
Beyond COLAGE 101 brainstorm:

1. What questions or concerns can you foresee coming up in your community if/when you bring up the idea to other adults about creating a space by youth and for youth in LGBTQ+ families?

2. What has worked or has not worked when organizing youth in LGBTQ+ families in your community?
Bring COLAGE to your next large event!

1. Identify the largest age range of youth who need and want a community in your local group.
   a. COLAGE programming focuses on these age groups: 8-10, 11-13, 14-18, 18+

2. Identify your budget for bringing COLAGE programming.

3. Schedule a call with COLAGE by emailing COLAGE@familyequality.org.
Additional Questions about COLAGE programming?
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO REVIEW:

https://queerspawnresource.org