



These words apply to children everywhere, including the Jewish community

Progressive Judaism Victoria (PJV) is proud to launch a new initiative to help address GLBT issues in Australia. This programme will bring a well-respected educator from the US, Andrea Jacobs, to facilitate a training institute for Jewish educators and communal professionals. She will lead community discussions to address the issues of GLBT youth in our Jewish schools and youth groups, and within the broader community.

The programme and training institute was started in the US in 2008 and has had an outstanding track record. It has been offered in Jewish communities across the US and in South Africa. The programme shows respect and understanding towards Judaism and its various sects.

This is a train-the-trainer programme. Participants have included lay leaders, Jewish educators, Jewish clergy and youth leaders. The participants have come together to learn to develop and lead initiatives to address diversity and acceptance in general, and GLBT inclusivity in particular.

It teaches specific skills and techniques to create a warm and welcoming environment in our community for all youth, especially GLBT youth. It does so in a Jewish context focusing on Jewish values and text.

"[This] is a must for anyone concerned about making each child feel safe to learn in all of our educational environments. This is not just about LGBT inclusivity - this is reframing the way we look at constructing educational spaces and should be mandatory for every teacher, educator, counselor and youth worker in the Jewish community."

—Naomi Less, Lead Consultant, Addressing Evaded Issues in Jewish Education, Ma'yan, Jewish Women's Project of the JCC of Manhattan.

PJV plans to bring to Australia an intensive two-day institute as well as community based programming.

Two Day Institute

1. **Beyond basics of GLBT inclusion** – identifying the need and setting goals. This topic covers basic issues helping participants understand the unique needs of GLBT students, families, and staff as well as outlining strategies for creating a truly inclusive experience for everyone.
2. **Case study workshop** –the programme uses case scenarios that have particular relevance to specific institutions. The goal of this workshop is to give educators/staff the opportunity to explore together how to respond to challenging situations such as homophobic bullying, use of “gay” and “fag,” diverse families, supporting a youth who comes out as GLB and/or T, etc.
3. **Understanding GLBT issues** - the similarities and differences between transgender issues and gay, lesbian, and bisexual issue are discussed in depth. This topic introduces participants to the specific issues of concern to transgender Jews and helps communities explore how to make themselves welcoming to Jews regardless of gender identity/presentation.
4. **GLBT and Judaism** – this topic gives participants an opportunity to delve into Jewish texts that directly or indirectly address issues of sexual orientation and gender diversity.

Workshops for Families and Teens

1. **Workshop on diversity and the Jewish community** – interactive activities and film clips bring the issue of diversity and respect for everyone to K-6 grade students and their families.
2. **Workshops for high school students and families** – focuses on diversity, identity, and creating inclusive community.
3. **Community discussion on GLBT inclusion and synagogue communities** – for synagogues looking to open the conversation about GLBT inclusion this workshop/discussion is a great resource to help begin or take our community to the next step.