



# Out for Health



Spring 2009

## Marriage Rights & Health? What's the Connection?

In September 2008 the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's Marriage Equity Initiative published a 16-page document on Same Sex Marriage and Health. That research, combined with news from Iowa and Vermont in recent weeks and the pending decision about marriage rights in California, has helped fuel conversations about same sex marriage in the media, among our friends and family and online.

**So, what's the connection between same sex marriage rights and health?** There are some important factors to know and think about from GLMAs "Same Sex Marriage and Health," of note, the health and well-being of LGBT people and their families is affected by the right to marry and by the denial of that right:

- ⌘ Access to health insurance through a spouse is an important component of obtaining quality healthcare
- ⌘ Research indicates, at least for heterosexuals, that being married can contribute to overall health and longevity.
- ⌘ Hospital visitation and decision making rights conferred by marriage are important to the quality of care.
- ⌘ Children of LGBT parents benefit when their families are respected and accorded legal protections.

**Want to learn more?** You can find the September 2008 Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's "Same Sex

Marriage and Health Report," including citations to published research on this topic at [www.glma.org](http://www.glma.org).

Iowa's Supreme Court legalized gay marriage Friday, April 3 in a unanimous decision that makes Iowa the third state to allow same sex couples to wed. The Iowa justices upheld a lower court ruling that rejected a state law restricting marriage to a union between a man and woman. The county attorney who defended the law said he would not seek a rehearing. The only recourse for opponents appeared to be a constitutional amendment, which could take years to ratify.

In their decision, the Supreme Court wrote **"If gay and lesbian people must submit to different treatment without an exceedingly persuasive justification, they are deprived of the benefits of the principle of equal protection upon which the rule of law is founded. To decide otherwise", the justices said, "would be an abdication of our constitutional duty."**

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### PPSFL FACT:



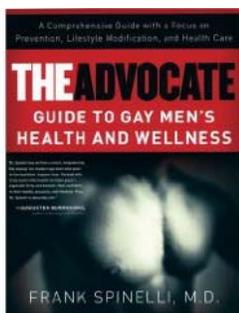
### Did you know?

You can request an appointment online with our medical providers! It's easy, it's secure, and best of all it's convenient!

➔ [www.ppsfl.org](http://www.ppsfl.org)

**Out for Health** is a project of Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes, proudly providing exceptional services, honest education & fearless advocacy in Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben and Tompkins Counties since 1968.

## Editor's Book Reviews: Gay Men's Health

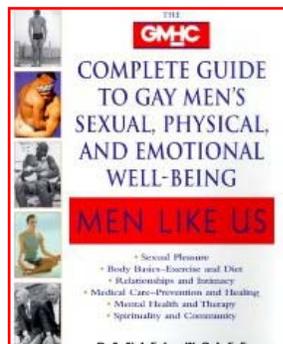


### **The Advocate Guide to Gay Men's Health and Wellness, by Frank Spinelli, M.D., 2008**

Focusing on prevention, lifestyle modification, and healthcare, Dr. Frank Spinelli has channeled his years of experience and research in order to create a comprehensive medical guide for gay men.

Covering topics ranging from immunization, physical exams, depression, substance abuse, and andropause, New York City's "hottest gay doctor" has compiled his knowledge into an invaluable guide specifically created for gay men.

**Frank Spinelli, M.D.**, is a board certified internist in private practice in New York City in addition to serving as clinical director of HIV at Cabrini Medical Center. Dr. Spinelli has made frequent television appearances and is the gay health expert on *Radio with a Twist*, a national talk show. Dr. Spinelli currently lives in the Chelsea section of Manhattan.



### **Men Like Us: The GMHC Complete Guide to Gay Men's Sexual, Physical, and Emotional Well-Being by Daniel Wolfe, 2000**

For nearly two decades, Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), has provided vital support, education, and health information to gay men in the New York City area. Now, with *Men Like Us*, their guidance--and the insights of hundreds of gay men across America--can help you.

Practical, down-to-earth, and accessible, this authoritative health resource covers such topics as: finding Doctor Right, sexually transmitted diseases (how to protect yourself, tell if you have them, and treat them), five tests and vaccines no gay man should go without, aging well (strategies for mind and body), and spirituality.

**Daniel Wolfe** is GMHC's former Director of Communications and a writer based in New York City.

## Ithaca College's Sport, Sexuality and Culture Conference

The Out for Health Program was delighted to place an ad in the conference booklet for Ithaca College's groundbreaking Sport, Sexuality and Culture Conference held this March on the IC campus.

This international gathering of researchers, academics, sports experts, media professionals, students, staff and faculty provided a unique forum for discussing the role and impact of sexuality in sports. Of note, former NBA player, John Amaechi, shared his thoughts on being in the closet as player and coming out after retirement.



**From the field,  
court, track, and  
locker room...  
to the doctor's office,  
we ALL deserve respect.**

**Planned Parenthood's  
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender  
Health and Wellness Project serving  
Corning, Elmira, Ithaca and Watkins Glen**

**Out for  
Health**

Coming soon...  
[www.outforhealth.org](http://www.outforhealth.org)



## Family Rejection as a Predictor of Negative Health Outcomes in White and Latino Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Young Adults

**Young gay and bisexual people whose parents or guardians responded negatively to the news of their sexuality were more likely to attempt suicide, suffer from depression, use illegal drugs and engage in unprotected sex, according to a recent study.**

Published in the January issue of Pediatrics, the study was based on a survey of 224 white and Hispanic young adults ages 21-25 who identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual.

**OBJECTIVE.** We examined specific family rejecting reactions to sexual orientation and gender expression during adolescence as predictors of current health problems in a sample of lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults.

**RESULTS.** Higher rates of family rejection were significantly associated with poorer health outcomes. On the basis of odds ratios, lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults who reported higher levels of family rejection during adolescence were 8.4 times more likely to report having attempted suicide,

5.9 times more likely to report high levels of depression, 3.4 times more likely to use illegal drugs, and 3.4 times more likely to report having engaged in unprotected sexual intercourse compared with peers from families that reported no or low levels of family rejection. Latino men reported the highest number of negative family reactions to their sexual orientation in adolescence.

**Providers who serve this population should assess and help educate families about the impact of rejecting behaviors. Counseling families, providing anticipatory guidelines and referring families for counseling and support can help make a critical difference in helping decrease risk and increase well bring for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth.**

**CONCLUSIONS.** This study establishes a clear link between specific parental and caregiver rejecting behaviors and negative health problems in young lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults. Providers who serve this population should assess and help educate families about the impact of rejecting behaviors. Counseling families, providing anticipatory guidelines and referring families for counseling and support can help make a critical difference in helping decrease risk and increase well bring for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth.

The study above is published in the January issue of Pediatrics by researchers from San Francisco State University and the University of Utah.

## Lesbian Judge Appointed to State's Second Highest Court

Governor David A. Paterson has appointed the Honorable Roslyn Richter to fill a vacancy in the Appellate Division, First Department. She is the highest openly gay jurist in the State.

Justice Richter has been a Justice of the Supreme Court since January 2003, and was an Acting Supreme Court Justice from 2000 to 2002. She currently presides over matrimonial and guardianship cases, and has had experience presiding over civil and criminal matters. From 1998 to 2000, Justice Richter was the Supervising Judge in Bronx Criminal Court, and the Deputy Supervising Judge in that court during 1997. She was a criminal court judge in New York County from 1990 to 1996, and from 1993 to 1996, also served as a part-time judge in the Midtown Community Court. From 1987 to 1990, she presided over administrative proceedings in the New York City Office of

Administrative Trials. She served in the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office from 1983 to 1987, as the Executive Director of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund from 1980 to 1983, and as an associate in private practice from 1978 to 1979. Justice Richter also teaches at New York Law School, and serves on a number of court advisory groups and bar association committees. Justice Richter received her Bachelor of Arts from Barnard College in 1976, and her Juris Doctor from Brooklyn Law School in 1979.

Governor Patterson said the following about Justice Richter and his four other appointees: "I am proud to appoint and nominate such a talented group of individuals to serve on our courts," said Governor Paterson. "Their experience and dedication will be a tremendous addition to New York's highly accomplished and respected courts."



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## Events Calendar!

**Ongoing when Ithaca College is in session:**  
Out of the Closet and Onto the Screen Film Series  
Spring 2009 Theme:  
Intersections of Sexuality & Faith in Film  
Ithaca College  
[www.ithaca.edu/lgbt](http://www.ithaca.edu/lgbt)

**April 23**  
LGBT Health & Wellness/ILGBTTF Coffeehouse  
Legal Issues: Options for Protecting our  
Relationships and Families  
Presented by Elizabeth Bixler  
and Mariette Geldenhuys  
7:00—8:30pm  
Unitarian Church Annex, 2nd Floor

**April 24-26**  
Pride and Joy Families Weekend, Utica  
[www.prideandjoyfamilies.org](http://www.prideandjoyfamilies.org)

**April 28**  
LGBT Equality & Justice Day, Albany  
[www.prideagenda.org](http://www.prideagenda.org)  
click on "Our Programs"

## Want more information about LGBT Health?

**National Coalition for LGBT Health**  
[www.lgbthealth.net](http://www.lgbthealth.net)



The National Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health is committed to improving the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and communities through public education, coalition building and advocacy that focus on research, policy, education and training.

Our members are dedicated to the concept that our ability to effect change will be determined by our bringing together the rich diversity of the LGBT community at a national level — across gender/ gender identity, race/ethnicity, disability, education, income, age and geography.



**Looking for more health  
information? We can help!**  
Email [LGBT@appsfl.org](mailto:LGBT@appsfl.org)!