

Transgender Training in Pietermaritzburg

The Gay & Lesbian Network in association with Gender Dynamix based in Cape Town will be hosting a series of events to introduce staff, volunteers of the Network and the public to an understanding of transgender, transsexual and gender non-conforming identities in Pietermaritzburg.

The Network identified the need to train staff and volunteer counselors on transgender issues so as to sensitize them on transgender needs thereby equipping them with skills in dealing with transgender people.

This came about from calls from the helpline and face to face counseling of people who identified as transgender.

Through these events people will be introduced to transgenderism and what it means to be transgendered, what causes transgenderism and how to deal with transgender people.

The events will include training of staff and volunteer counselors and a public workshop with a possibility of establishing a support group for transgender people.

The dates for the events will start on the 25th and end on the 27th September 2008. The events include the following:

- Training of staff and volunteer counselors – Thursday, 25th September
- The public workshop will take place on Friday, 26th September at the Bessie Head library auditorium from 13h30 – 16h30
- Meeting to establish transgender support group – Saturday, 27th September

The director of the Gay & Lesbian Network said: “It's great to have Gender Dynamix here to train staff and volunteer counselors as there is a need for us to understand and to be sensitized on transgender issues as we are dealing with transgender people and the training would assist us to provide empathic support to their needs. Gender Dynamix would provide ongoing support as well.”

Liesl Theron, director of Gender Dynamix said: “We are privileged to be able to provide support and assistance to the Gay & Lesbian Network and our collaborate work would assist in creating an environment for transgender people to exist and through our training would provide staff and volunteer counselors at the Network with the skills and understanding of transgender people which would go along way of providing them with support.”

Gender Dynamix also featured on Special Assignment on SABC3 last month.

One of the trainers from Gender Dynamix Caroline Bowley will also be a judge for the Mr & Miss Gay Spring pageant which take place on Saturday 27 September at the Kismet Hotel.

For more information or to attend the public workshop contact Ponie Ngcobo at Tel: (033) 3426165.