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PARENTS, GAURDIANS, AND FOSTER PARENTS of LGBTQ YOUTH **Parent Track at Models of Pride Conference on Saturday, October, 15, 2011**

Parents of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth are invited to attend workshops at the Models of Pride (MOP) conference to be held at the University of Southern California, Exposition Boulevard and Figueroa Street, in Los Angeles on Saturday, October 15, 2011.

“Family Focus: Workshops for Parents, Guardians and Foster Parents of LGBTQ Youth” is the Parent Track of the day-long youth conference, Models of Pride, now in its 19th year, which is expected to draw 600 LGBTQ youth and their straight allies, ages 12 to 24.

The MOP Parent Track workshops are designed to provide emotional support, education and advocacy strategies for keeping their LGBTQ youth safe at home and at school.

Registration and continental breakfast for the Parent Track begins at 8:30 a.m. The program opens at 9 a.m. and concludes at 4:45 p.m. Also included are lunch (free for the first 60 parents to register) and a Resource Faire. The MOP conference is free for both parents and youth, and parents may attend with or without their children. See www.modelsofpride.org for more information.

The first morning session of the Parent Track begins with a workshop on supporting “coming out” issues for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth, and a separate workshop for parents of transgender and gender non-conforming children. The second morning session focuses on issues families may face in their faith communities when a child identifies as LGBTQ. After lunch a third session will focus on challenges of LGBTQ youth – family acceptance, school achievement, personal safety, and vulnerability to risky behaviors. The fourth and final session focuses on advocating for LGBTQ youth in school and their legal rights. Presenters of these five sessions include parents of LGBTQ youth, many active in PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays); a parent advocate with TYFA (Trans Youth Family Allies); mental health professionals; clergy; and attorneys with ACLU and Lambda Legal.

Optional activities for parents include attending the Entertainment Session with the youth at 5 p.m., and Dinner Out at 6 p.m. with other parents (pay your own way, restaurant TBA). Parents may pick up youth attending the Models of Pride dinner and dance at 9 p.m.

Parents, register online by October 8, 2011: www.modelsofpride.org/register/parent_track.html. On-site registration October 15, 2011 is limited to space availability. Carpooling or public transportation is encouraged, as USC parking costs \$8 and is very limited, as is off-site and street parking. Pre-registrants will receive an e-mail on public transportation and building information after October 8, 2011.

Models of Pride is organized by the LA Gay and Lesbian Center’s LifeWorks Program. The Parent Track workshops are coordinated by Gail Rolf, Education Director, Friends of Project 10 Inc..

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