



GAY MARRIAGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

THE IMPACT OF REDEFINING MARRIAGE ON EDUCATION





INTRODUCTION

If the legal definition of marriage changes, there will be huge political pressure to make sure the new definition is taught within schools. Already, gay pressure groups have drawn up lists of recommended books for schools to use with pupils. This report contains extracts from some of the materials recommended for use in primary schools by Britain's biggest homosexual lobby group, Stonewall.

Legal obligation

Not only will there be political pressure, there will also be a legal requirement to teach about same-sex marriage. Section 403(1A)(a) of the Education Act 1996 imposes a duty on the Secretary of State to "issue guidance" to ensure that pupils "learn the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children" as part of sex education.

If the legal definition of marriage changes, the law will require that children learn about gay marriage as part of sex education. Sex education is mandatory in secondary schools. Many primary schools also choose to teach sex education in some form. Wherever the subject is taught, the law requiring teaching about the importance of marriage applies.

Worryingly, when the Home Office launched the consultation on redefining marriage they were not aware of the implications of this law.¹ Even months after the consultation had concluded, an Education Minister confirmed that the department was still not sure how the Government's proposals would affect schools.²

Parents and teachers sidelined

Legal advice provided by leading human rights lawyer Aidan O'Neill QC confirms that schools would be under an obligation to teach children about gay marriage within sex education. In addition, if gay marriage is taught within schools outside sex education, Mr O'Neill says that parents would have "little prospects of success" in claiming a legal right to withdraw children from such lessons.

The same advice also shows that a school could take disciplinary action against a teacher who, for reasons of conscience or belief, asked not to be required to promote gay marriage within the school. It seems inescapable that if same-sex marriage is legalised many teachers will refuse to teach it to their pupils, triggering scores of expensive and divisive court cases and souring relations both in staffrooms and between schools and parents.

Overturning parental values

This report looks at some of the primary school materials on the list of recommended resources drawn up by Stonewall. A teacher training guide, also produced by Stonewall, suggests that primary school children could perform some of the storybooks as school plays.

An accompanying teacher training DVD produced by Stonewall, with support from the taxpayer-funded Training and Development Agency for Schools, suggests that pupils must become "resilient" to the values of their parents and grandparents. This is in reference to some parents and grandparents who may have objections to issues such as gay marriage.

In 2009, Muslim and Christian parents in Waltham Forest, East London, were threatened with prosecution for withdrawing their children from primary schools lessons that used the gay marriage story book, *King & King* (see pages 6 and 7). The council said the

withdrawals were "unauthorised" absences and that action would be taken against the parents.

American experience

In the US state of California, gay marriage was briefly legalised in 2008 following a ruling by the courts. Shortly after, a group of 18 first-grade school children (aged 6 and 7) from San Francisco were taken on a field trip to their teacher's lesbian wedding.

Gay marriage was legalised in the US state of Massachusetts in 2004 following a state court ruling. In 2006 two sets of parents took legal action against the school district of their children's elementary school. A teacher in a second-grade class (children aged 7 to 8) had used the *King & King* storybook, in which a prince marries another prince in a gay wedding. The parents said the book's themes were not appropriate for their children's age, and that using the book without their consent was a violation of their civil rights. But judges in a federal appeal court ruled against the parents and sided with the school.

Widespread impact

The redefinition of marriage is a policy proposal with society-wide implications. Its impact will be widespread, because marriage itself is widespread. Marriage is woven into the laws, culture and language of our everyday lives. This includes what is taught to our children by teachers in our schools.

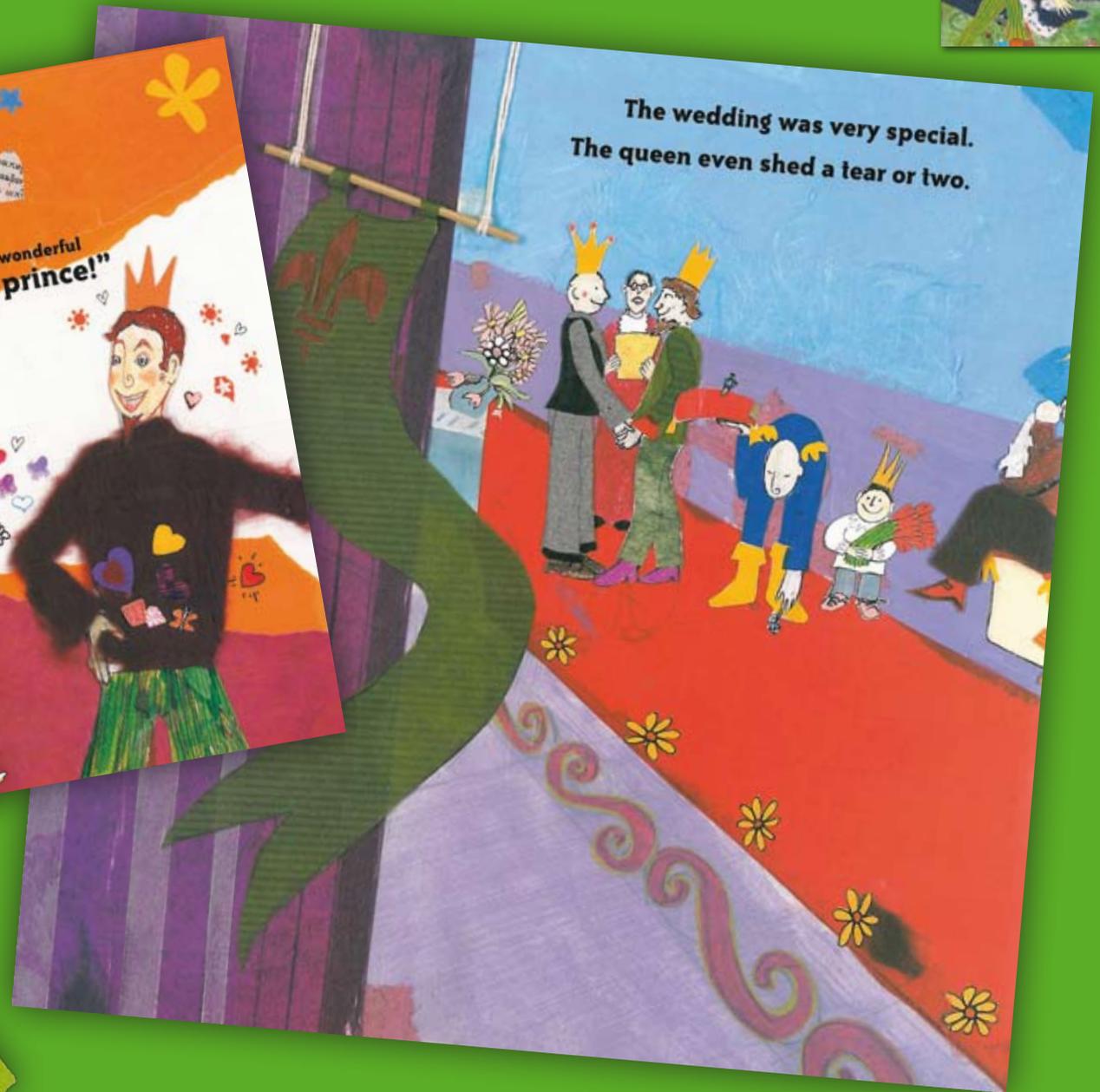
References

¹ *Daily Mail*, 2 July 2012

² *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 November 2012

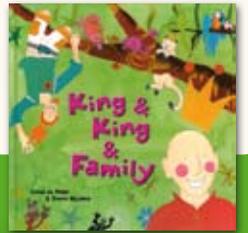
KING & KING

Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland



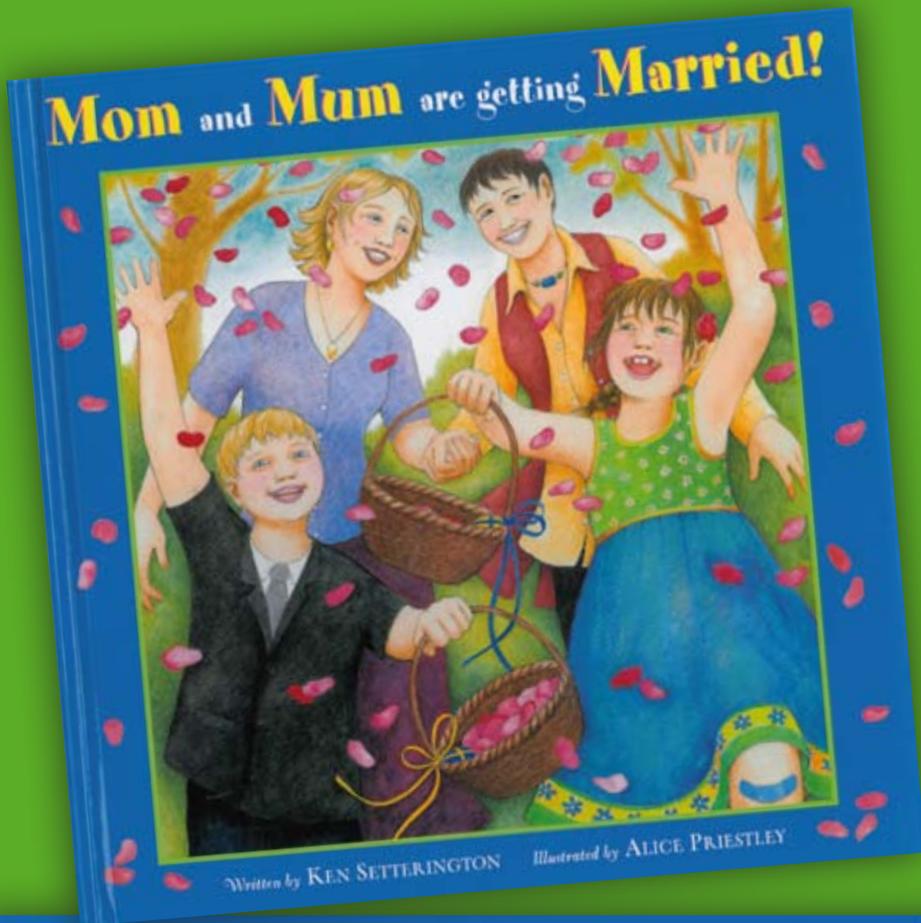
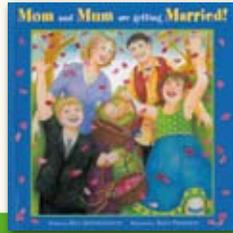
KING & KING & FAMILY

Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland



MOM AND MUM ARE GETTING MARRIED!

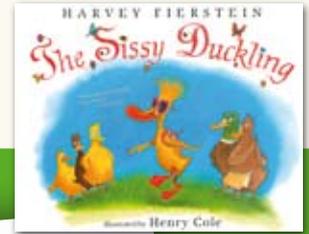
Ken Setterington and Alice Priestley



When Rosie finds out that her two mothers are planning to get married, she has only one worry ... will she get to be a flower girl?

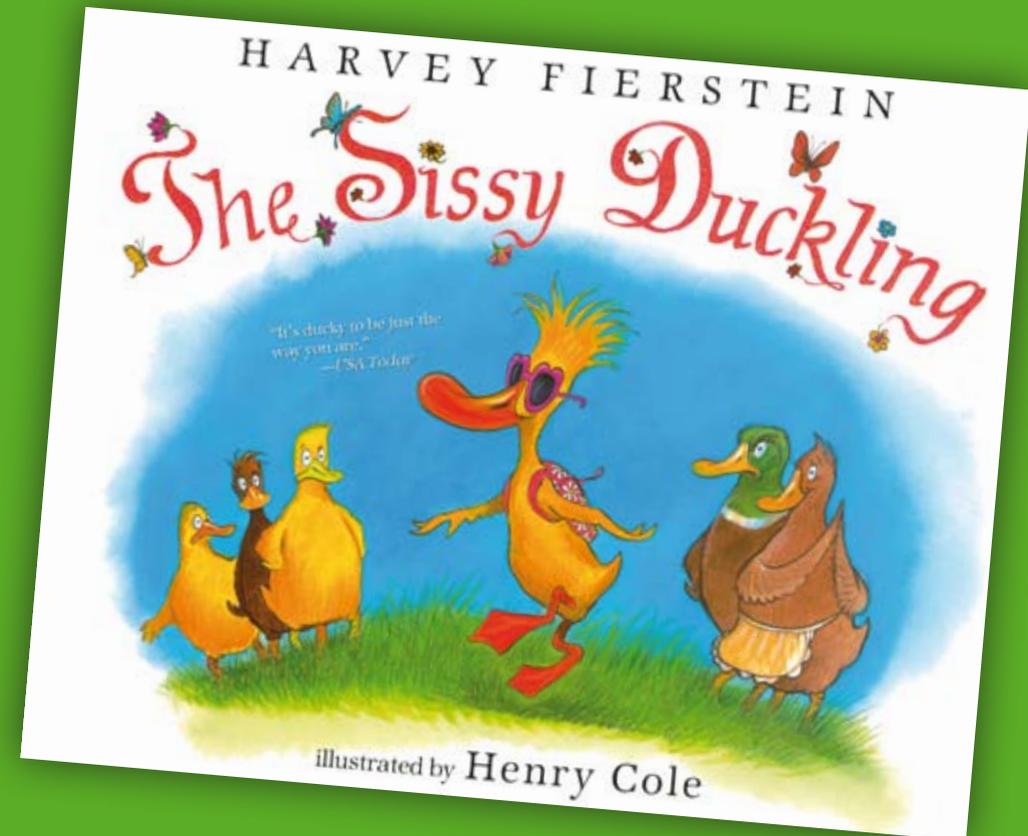
THE SISSY DUCKLING

Harvey Fierstein and Henry Cole



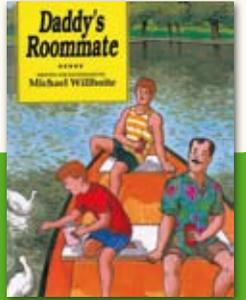
a BIG SISSY and PROUD of it!"

dedicated to proud sissies everywhere

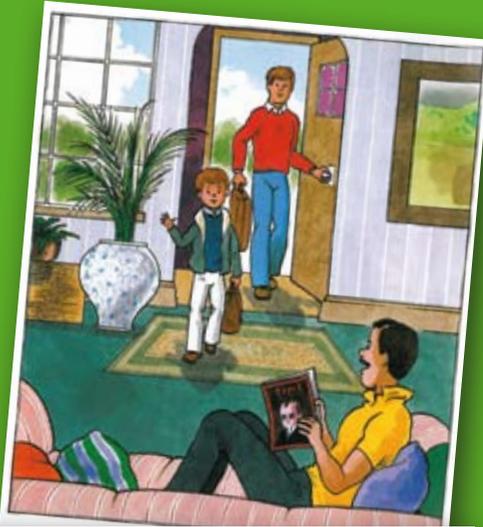


DADDY'S ROOMMATE

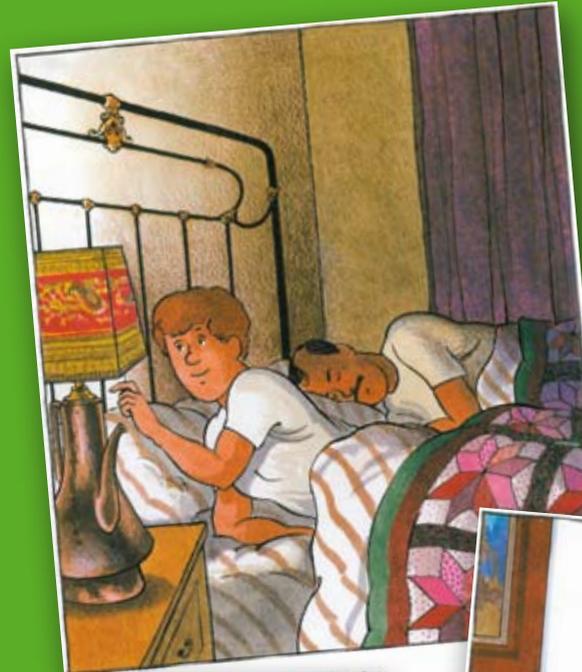
Michael Willhoite



My Mommy and Daddy got a divorce last year.



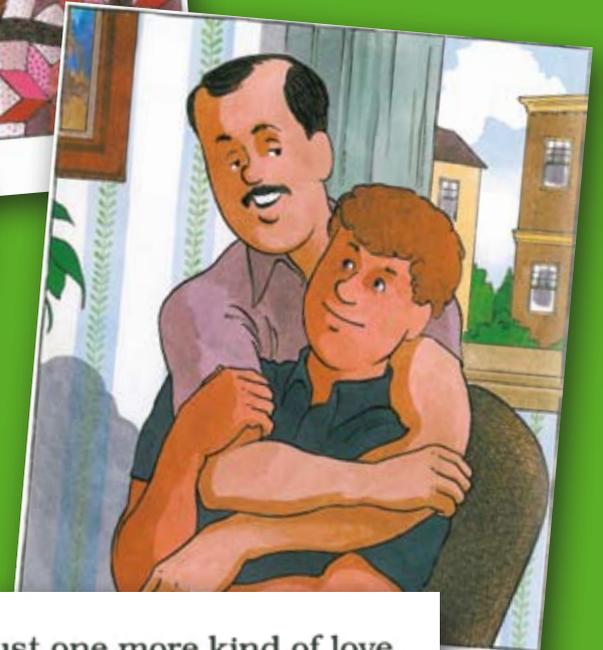
Now there's somebody new at Daddy's house.



Sleep together,



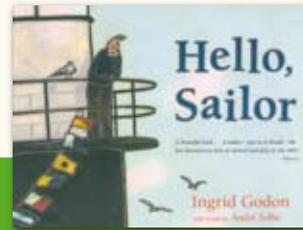
Daddy and his roommate Frank live together,



Being gay is just one more kind of love.

HELLO, SAILOR

Ingrid Godon and André Sollie



'A beautiful book . . . it makes – just as it should – the love between two men as natural and deep as any other.'

Observer

The man went inside the lighthouse and climbed the steep spiral staircase. His heart was pounding.

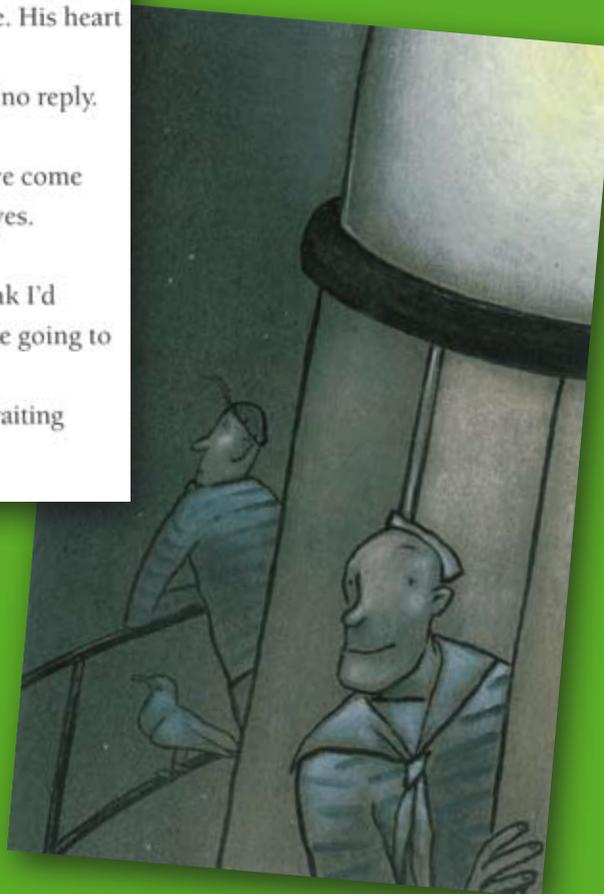
"Matt?" he called again. Still no reply. He opened the door quietly.

"Sailor!" Matt gasped. "You've come back!" He couldn't believe his eyes.

"Hello, Sailor!"

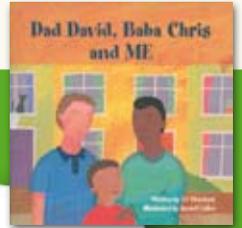
Sailor laughed. "Did you think I'd forgotten you? I thought we were going to sail round the world together."

"Yes," cried Matt. "I've been waiting for you!"



DAD DAVID, BABA CHRIS AND ME

Ed Merchant and Rachel Fuller



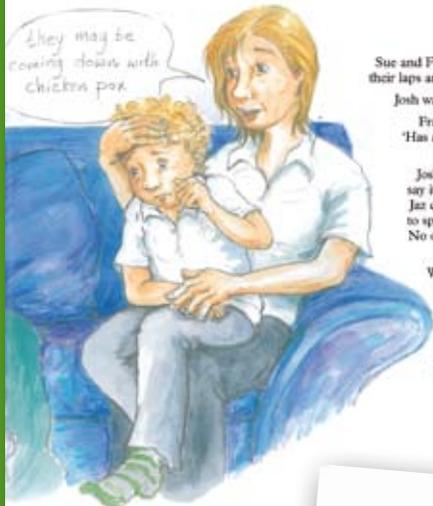
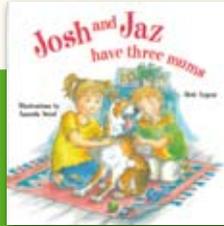
But I'm not just ordinary, because I have three dads: Dad David and Baba Chris and my birth dad, Alex.

NORMAL??



JOSH AND JAZ HAVE THREE MUMS

Hedi Argent and Amanda Wood



Sue and Fran took the twins on their laps and they had a cuddle.

Josh was crying as well now.

Fran asked them gently, 'Has anything happened at school to upset you?'

Josh didn't know how to say it and went on crying. Jaz cried harder and tried to speak at the same time. No one could understand what she said.

When she managed to stop crying, she said it again: 'I don't want to make a family tree. Everyone else has got a mum and a dad and we've got two mums instead.'

When she managed to stop crying, she said it again: 'I don't want to make a family tree. Everyone else has got a mum and a dad and we've got two mums instead.'



'And some children live with two dads or two mums like you,' said Fran.

'And some children are adopted like us,' said Josh and Jaz together.

'But no one else in our class lives with two mums,' said Jaz, 'and I've still got a tummy ache.'

'I still don't want to go to school tomorrow,' growled Josh.

'As a matter of fact,' said Sue, 'You have got three mums and a dad as well.'

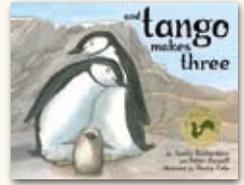
'But that's even worse. I don't want to have one dad and three mums,' said Josh, 'we can't put three mums on our family tree!'

'But other children will laugh at us if we have three mums,' said Jaz.



AND TANGO MAKES THREE

Justin Richardson, Peter Parnell and Henry Cole

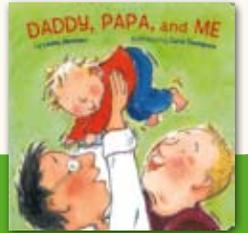


They didn't spend much time with the girl penguins, and the girl penguins didn't spend much time with them. Instead, Roy and Silo wound their necks around each other. Their keeper Mr. Gramzay noticed the two penguins and thought to himself, "They must be in love."



DADDY, PAPA, AND ME

Lesléa Newman and Carol Thompson



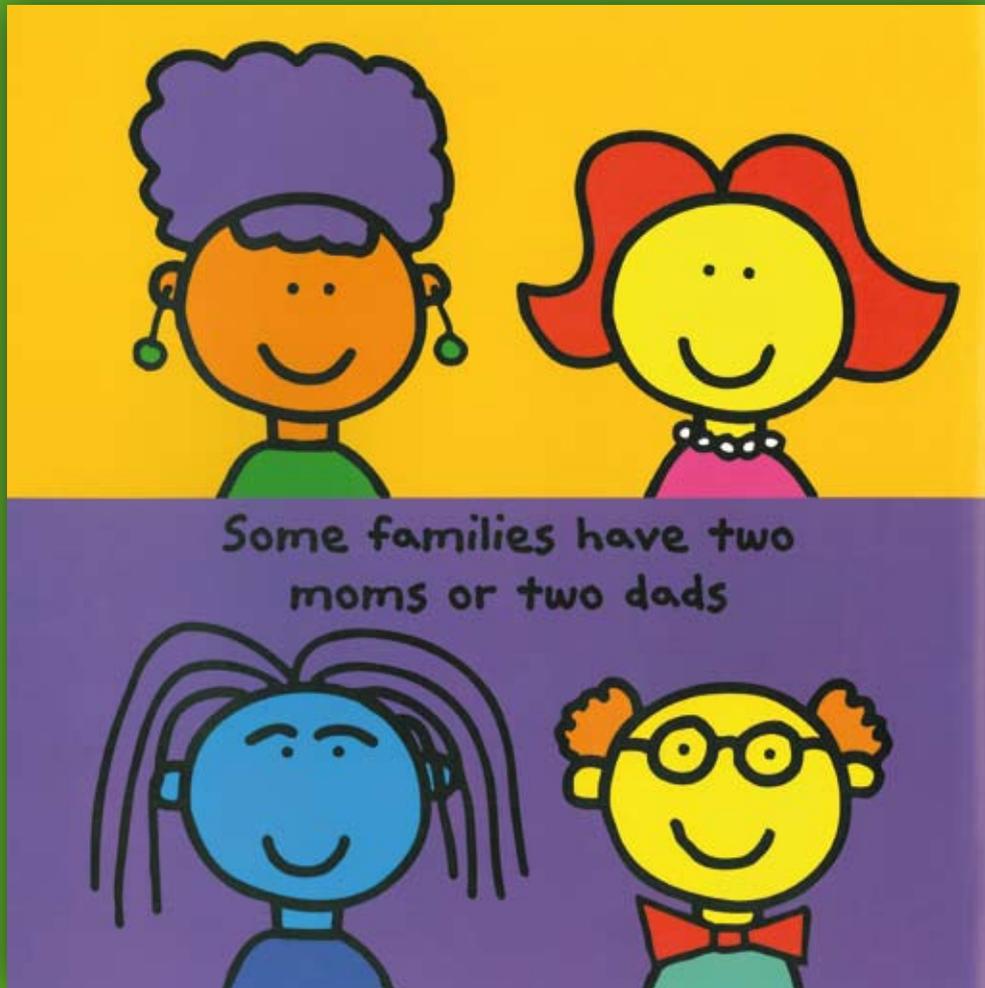
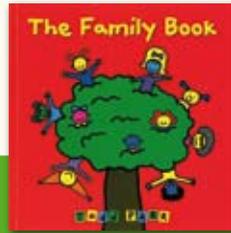
Now Daddy and Papa
are tucked in tight.

I kiss them both and
say, "Night-night!"



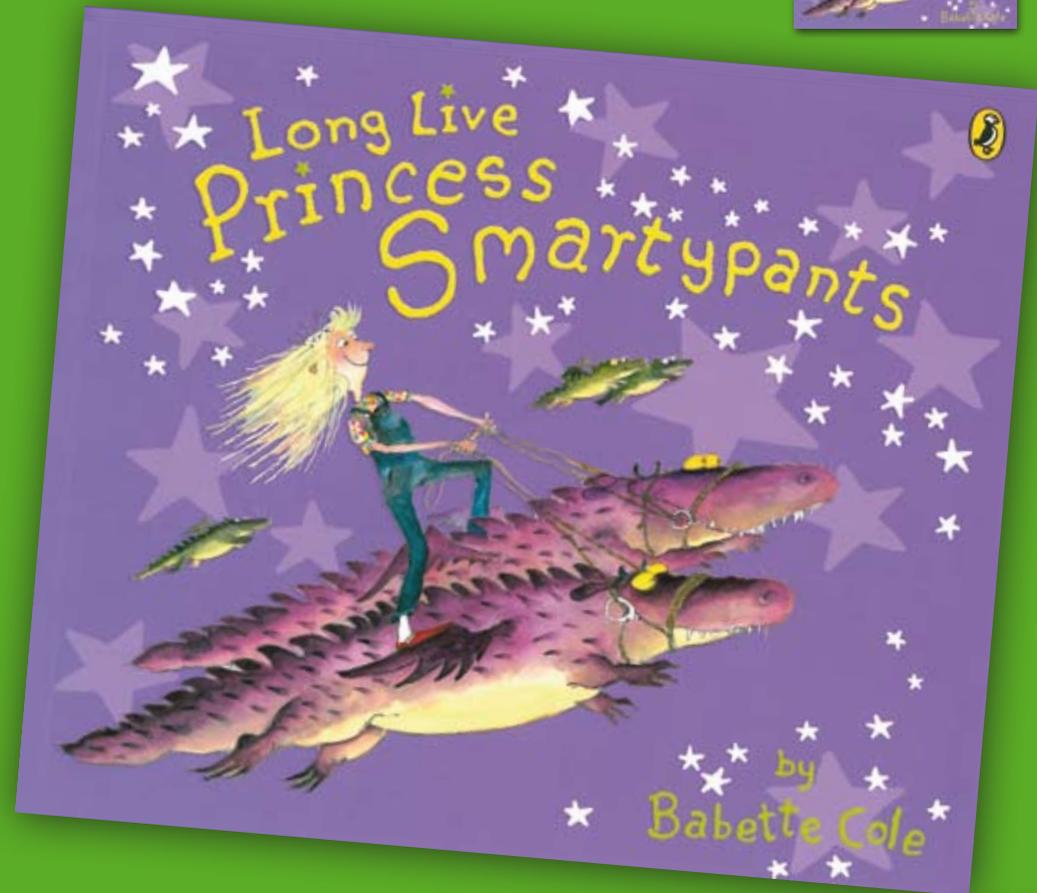
THE FAMILY BOOK

Todd Parr



LONG LIVE PRINCESS SMARTYPANTS

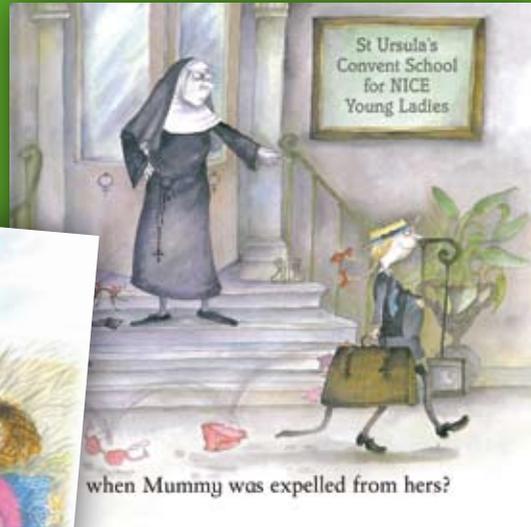
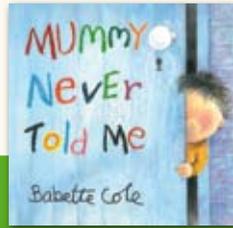
Babette Cole



When *Princess Smarty Pants* decides it would be lovely to have a BABY there isn't much that can stand in her way - certainly not her aversion to princes!

MUMMY NEVER TOLD ME

Babette Cole

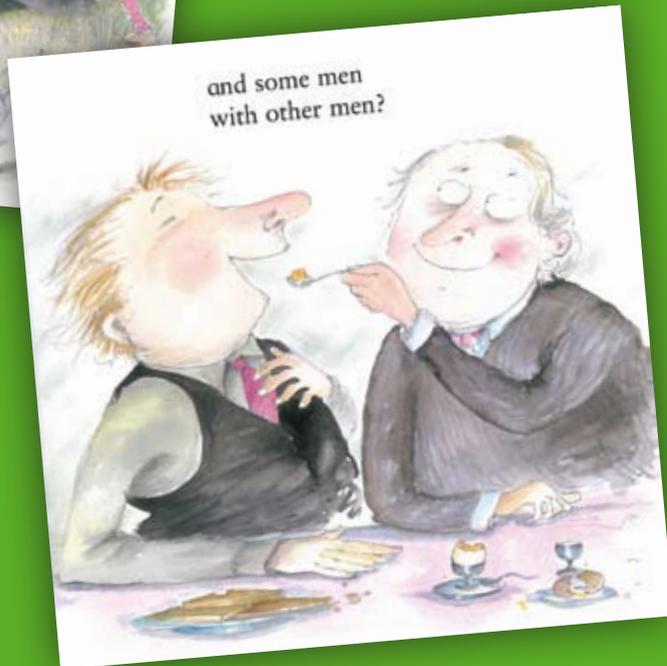


when Mummy was expelled from hers?

Why do some women prefer to fall in love with other women . . .

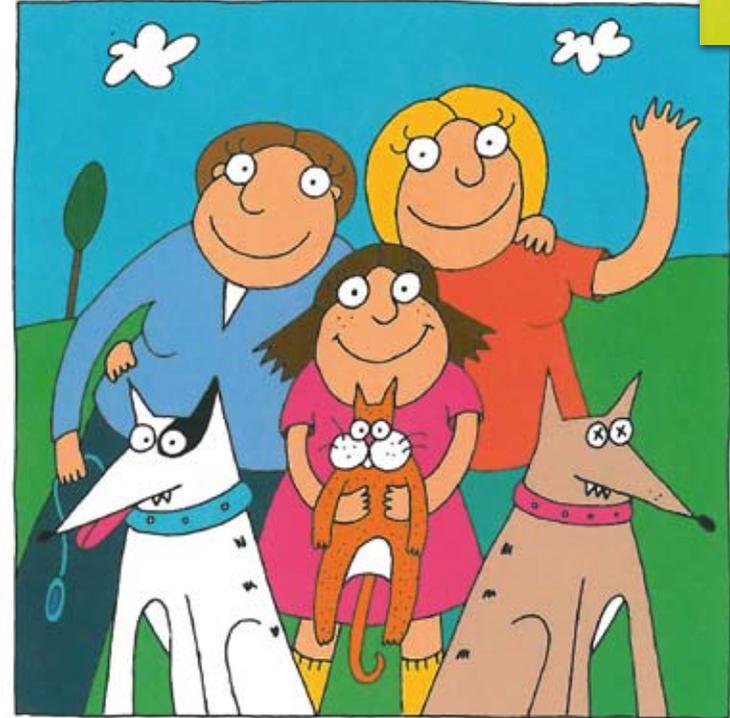
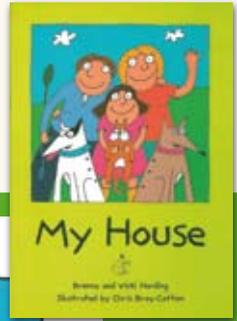


and some men with other men?



MY HOUSE

Brenna and Vicki Harding
and Chris Bray-Cotton

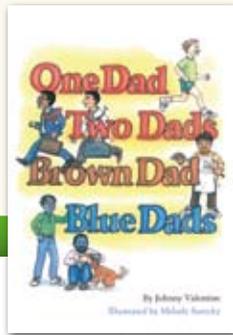


I've got a cat and two dogs.
I've got two mums.
This is me.



ONE DAD, TWO DADS, BROWN DAD, BLUE DADS

Johnny Valentine and Melody Sarecky

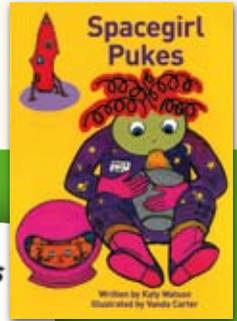


"What funny ideas you have," replied Lou.
"Do you think dads are different,
because they are blue?
My dads both play piano."

"What funny ideas you have," replied Lou.
"Do you think dads are different,
because they are blue?
My dads both play piano,
and one of them cooks.
(He makes wonderful chocolate cream pies.)"

SPACEGIRL PUKES

Katy Watson and Vanda Carter



The author and the illustrator of *Spacegirl Pukes* are members of *Out for Our Children*, a group of London Lesbian parents making books and materials for children.

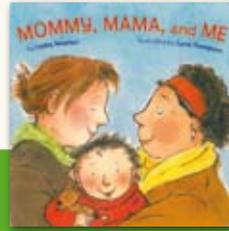
Then Mummy Neenee said 'Oh no!
Bleurg! She was sick in the bucket.
Then Mummy Loula was sick as
well. **Bleurg!**

Poor mummies!
Poor Spacegirl!



MOMMY, MAMA, AND ME

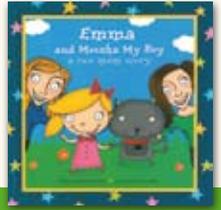
Lesléa Newman and Carol Thompson



EMMA AND MEESHA MY BOY

A TWO MUM STORY

Kaitlyn Considine and Binny Hobbs



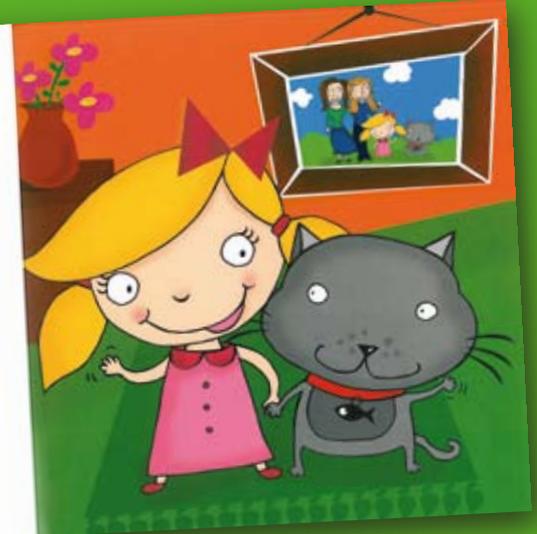
Now I'm tucked in
nice and tight.

Mommy and Mama
kiss me goodnight.



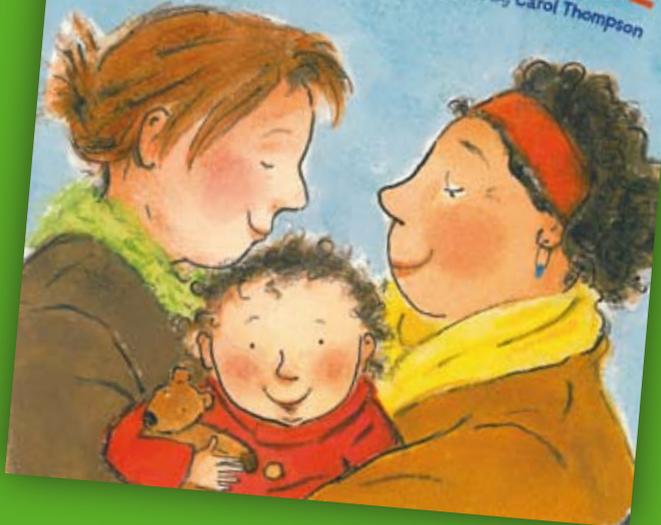
This is Emma.

She lives with her
two moms
and a
chubby housecat.



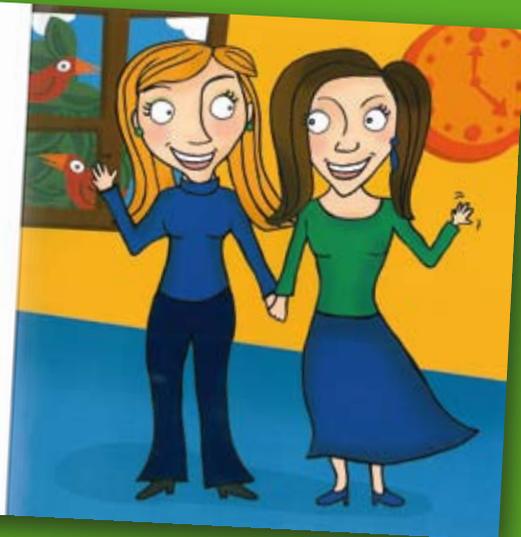
MOMMY, MAMA, and ME

by Lesléa Newman
Illustrated by Carol Thompson



Just so you know
who's who
let me tell you
that one of the moms
is Mama
and the other is
Mommy.

That makes two.





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