Queer Parent Convenings

Overview

November 2021
Welcome! I’m so happy you’re watching this!
Queer Parent Convenings

The Queer Parent Convenings are an opportunity to connect and share with other queer and trans parents and to explore together some of what parenting queerly means to you, particularly in regards to gender, sex, and sexuality in family-building. How do we shape our families and how in turn does that ongoing practice shape us as caregivers? Additionally, participants will be able to learn somatic and improvisational practices in order to newly consider and process parenting experiences.
Facilitators

- **Pati Garcia** is a queer Latinx certified Sexological Bodyworker and Certified Professional Midwife. Pati has been involved in revolutionary somatic approaches to feminist body autonomy cultivation from a Latinx gender non-conforming perspective since 2004.
- **Darcelle Lewis** is a queer and non-binary feminist and mental health activist from Trinidad & Tobago.
- **Paloma N Irizarry** is a Boricua birthworker, performer, creator, and facilitator who feels at home in the unknown and collective problem solving based in Philadelphia.
- **Michèle Steinwald** is a Canadian, feminist, DIY, artist-centered, pseudo-forensic, embodied, community-driven, cultural organizer working in the US.
- **Meg Foley** is a queer parent, performance artist, and educator based between Philadelphia and the Detroit area.
Catalyst Questions for group reflection

What are ways in which you feel or felt unseen by the process of building a family as a queer person? How have you felt or do you feel seen?

How did your gender feel during pregnancy? How did that shift or evolve postpartum?

How do you teach your kids about queerness? About gender?

How do you consider gender in raising your child(ren) and building a family?

How does your sexuality and sex practice relate to your family-building?
Structure

- Intensive: Intimate cohort of parent participants (5-8 people) meeting online for 6-8 weeks ($200 stipend provided/participant)
- Drop In: TBD - We are in the process of figuring out a drop-in option or less intensive structure for those interested
- Two group formations:
  - queer gestational parents group to focus on experiences of gestation and gender, centering gender non-conforming experiences
  - queer parents group, inclusive of all parents
- Group sessions will be comprised of dedicated story share time followed by group reflection, guided by facilitators and prompted by one of the catalytic questions
- somatic and creative exercises will be offered throughout to support the group
What is Blood Baby?

http://www.megfoley.org/blood-baby.html

The Queer Parent Convenings are conceived of in relation to Blood Baby, a multiformat performance project that explores intersecting embodiments of queerness, gender, and family-building. The Queer Parent Convenings are not part of the performances but are a separate network-building effort for queer and trans parents, initiated by Blood Baby director Meg Foley and shaped by the facilitation team.
More about the project leader: Meg Foley (she/her)

I am a gender expansive, cis-ish queer parent to a 6 yr old kid who self identifies as nonbinary. My partner and co-parent is trans nonbinary whose coming out process advanced while I was pregnant.

As an artist, I am always trying to get at the reality of what it feels like to be human: the 24 hr body and the implications of taking a body- and movement-centered outlook. I make dances from a sensation-oriented approach that embraces that our experiences integrate on a cellular level; they live in our bodies. Our bodies are portals, and the site through which life is lived… and I try to communicate this approach through multi-disciplinary performance and art-making.

Now, I’m trying to process and express the prismatic experience of gender shifting and body shifting in relation to queerness, parenting and parenting spaces, sexuality, and community.

http://www.megfoley.org/
Some images of Blood Baby and the creative process (clockwise from top L):
1- idea mapping for principles of convening
2- rehearsal with Meg’s kiddo
3- Meg and collaborator Valerie Oliveiro dancing
4- Meg’s kiddo doing drag as a boulder
More images of Blood Baby process (clockwise from top L): 1 and 2- rehearsal photos of Meg and her kiddo 3- set for one of the performances. Carpet Womb, an immersive dance installation and hot, ritual, gay disco 4- Collaborator Vitche-Boul Ra dancing in Carpet Womb set
Reflective creation

As part of the Queer Parent Convenings, participants will be invited to contribute to the creation of a zine and/or a work of art that shares insights, advice, and resources around queer parenting, guided by the facilitators. The final form of this document will depend on participants’ desired mode of communication and expression.

- Participants can decide which information to share publicly and what stays private within the convenings and participation in creative sharing is optional.
Timeline

- First gestational parents group began Oct 24
- Parents group will begin early 2022, exact date TBD
- Plan to follow same structure, subject to change in response to how the initial group goes and to parent feedback
- Currently in discussion about drop in option, pop-ups, and less intensive scheduling options - let us know what you’d like!
- Reunion meeting, 2 or 3 months after completion of groups, merging cohorts and to share creative documents.
- Groups will continue for next 2+ years
Thank you for your time and attention!

Questions? Feedback? Interested in participating?

Email bloodbabyproject@gmail.com
IG DM @_bloodbaby
megfoley.org/convenings