

## Hey Dad

REGINALD DOMINGO

### ***A new community group is providing gay fathers and their children with support – and play dates.***

“For most gay dads, the road is a long one,” says father of two, Dominic Gili. “A point sometimes lost on some men who can do in only a few minutes what it takes gay dads months, even years, of intricate planning and sometimes up to \$100,000 to achieve.”

And while Gili’s own experience in becoming a father is nothing short of remarkable, it was a decision he feels “that was made with very little advice and support”.

Thankfully, that’s all changed. In 2005, a chance conversation with another gay dad led to a meeting with others. “In time we discovered an online group and another gay dads group,” Dominic says, “and at Fair Day this year, the three groups came together for the first time.” Today, they comprise of The Gay Dads NSW group.

“The Gay Dads NSW group brings together gay men from Sydney and regional areas that are planning on becoming or are already parents,” Gili says. Fathers include those who are biological, are parents through foster care, adoption, surrogacy, from previous or current relationships, and guardians. Currently, there are more than 130 members.

In addition to providing information and support networks for gay fathers, the group also aims to provide opportunities for children of gay fathers



*Sandro Nocentini and his son, Alexander. Photo: Stephen Bethell*

to meet, play and build friendships with other children in similar family environments. Furthermore, Gili says, through its Yahoo group, Gay Dads NSW also provides “an online forum, for gay men state-wide to ask questions, seek advice and share experiences”.

To raise awareness, Gay Dads NSW will be hosting an info night to discuss issues that affect gay fathers and their children at schools. Speakers will include Anthony Semann of Marrickville Council’s Children & Family Services

and Miriam Guigni of Tillman Park Childcare Centre.

For Gili, it will be a fundamental tool in reaching out to the community. “I want my son and daughter to be able to walk through life with their heads held high. I want them to know that are loved by their parents, and also are a valued part of their community where respect, acceptance and inclusion are paramount.”

**Gay Dads NSW info night will be held on Monday, June 19, 6:45pm-9pm, at Twenty10 Head Office, 43 Bedford St, Newtown. Limited spaces available. To book a place, or for more information, email [info@gaydadsnsw.com.au](mailto:info@gaydadsnsw.com.au)**  
**This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it**

**REGINALD DOMINGO**