

- [About Us](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Research](#)
- [FAQ](#)



[Menu](#)

- [Home](#)
- [Our Work](#)
 - [Fertility Preservation for Trans People](#)
 - [AHR](#)
 - [Celebrating LGBTQ Parenting](#)
 - [Dykes Planning Tykes Film](#)
 - [Father Visibility Working Group](#)
 - [Family Tree](#)
 - [Parental Recognition](#)
 - [Trans Parenting](#)

- [Courses](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Directory](#)
 - [Join the Directory](#)
- [Contact](#)
 - [Pride & Joy – Annual Newsletter](#)
 - [eNews](#)
- [Donate](#)

Gerard Veldhoven

You are here:

1. [Home](#)
2. [Father Visibility Working Group](#)
3. Gerard Veldhoven

• **Gay Parenting and Grand Parenting: A Personal Account**

In an effort to convey my thoughts and deeply felt feelings regarding my role as a gay man, father of a gay son, as well as a straight son and more recently a grandfather, I must relate a little bit of history which brought me to this point in life.

Growing up in The Netherlands, a country well known for its tolerance, I realized at the age of about ten, an attraction to other boys. My first sexual experience was at thirteen with a lad who hailed from Indonesia. I pursued my encounters a few more times before it was decided we would set sail for Canada at age fourteen. This move would prove to be quite difficult as my contacts were severed and my thoughts wondered how this would manifest in a new land.

Once settled into our new way of life, I longed for sexual contacts, knowing homosexuality was illegal in Canada. This would not interfere with my attempt to reach my goal. Eventually, through school friends, I managed to succeed in my quest. So, along with a few Dutch gay friends I began a journey that would change direction.

Late 1959 and I was looking for some sort of stability in my life. While hospitalized in 1961 with pneumonia, I met a nurse who I eventually would marry. As a gay man I realized this to be a complete turn about. Living in Halifax, Nova Scotia, was not precisely a comfortable place to be gay. Now, as a married "straight" man, it became clear I dearly wished to be a father.

Our first son Chris was born October 12, 1966. Soon it became clear the marriage probably would not last. However, I was in this for better or for worse. In 1969 I was offered a job to teach at the Interprovincial School for the Deaf in Amherst, Nova Scotia. Shortly after the move my wife, a registered nurse, found a position with the Amherst Regional Hospital.

That same year our second son made his appearance and again, I was elated to be a father once more. A year after we bought our first home it was abundantly clear the marriage was doomed. I could no longer be living in a heterosexual relationship as my gay tendencies came to the forefront. So, this ended my life as a closeted gay man and I quickly became the openly gay father of a gay son and a straight son. My sons were now the pivotal part of my existence.

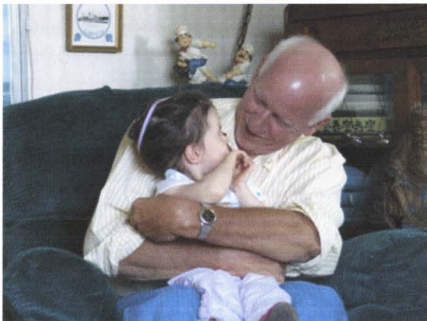
February 1975, I entered into a relationship with Norman Carter and my life was at a turning point. I was now on track one. We set up housekeeping and became the first same-sex couple to do so in this area with a complete family as Norman's two teenage daughters lived with us for a number of years. Regretfully, my sons moved to Yarmouth with their mother. I was devastated.

I concentrated my efforts on making this family work. The girls were now part of my daily life and I treated them like my own kids. Being a "step dad" agreed with me even though the youngest girl had a problem with her father being in a gay relationship. However, time would take care of that and eventually we found a mutual respect. The oldest daughter took everything in stride and always showed how much she cared. Eventually of course, I was able to get legally married to Norman in the first public same-sex wedding in Atlantic Canada.

My boys grew older and Chris graduated from high school and moved to Kingston Ontario to attend Queens University. He became very active in gay issues and eventually moved to Toronto where he continued his activism. I also became an activist for gay rights and equal marriage. Thus a gay father followed in the footsteps of his gay son.

My youngest son also ended up moving to Toronto. He married a wonderful woman and a few years later I became a grandfather. This was a totally new experience since this was my very own grandchild. My expectations were now complete. A gay father of a gay and a straight son is having the best of both worlds. Now I became a gay grandfather to this beautiful girl. The fact I am a gay man is not really a concern as I realize this little girl is part of me, regardless of my sexual orientation. It is a pride that now can be publicly displayed. Because of the acceptance by most of society, gay parenting and grand parenting is indeed a joy and "normal" in every sense of the word. Unless one has experienced this utterly sensational journey, it may be difficult to grasp the importance of being a parent or grandparent. The feeling this creates is extremely difficult to explain, suffice to say it totally consumes one's being. The reality of gay parenting and grand parenting is the fact it feels natural and inclusive. How profound the changes through the years turned out to be.





Additional Links

[Accessibility](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)
[Terms of Use](#)

eNews

Sign up for our eNewsletter.

Your Email

Connect with Us

- [Research](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Training](#)
- [About Us](#)

LGBTQ Parenting Network is a program of [Sherbourne Health Centre](#) - Website by [Design de Plume](#)

[Back to Top](#)