

Jewish board denounces homophobia

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The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies (JBD), an umbrella group representing Jewish organisations, synagogues and schools in NSW, last week adopted an anti-homophobia/transphobia policy.

The policy was voted in without objection at a JBD meeting on May 25, a decision that JBD member Roy Freeman told *Sydney Star Observer* was a positive

step for GLBT people in the Jewish community.

"It's definitely long overdue, but it's good that it's finally happened. It means that Jewish GLBT people finally have some recognition from within the community," he said.

"The implementation of this policy means we can start pushing for more support services to help young GLBT

people come to terms with their sexuality, and also to help their families come to terms with it.

"The next step is to get a group together. I've already put the idea out there of having something similar to PFLAG, but specifically for Jewish families, because being Jewish and gay adds a unique twist.

"In Judaism, your life is somewhat

mapped out for you from cradle to grave — you're expected to get married, have children, and your whole life is plotted out for you. Parents go through a grief process when that doesn't work out for their child, and we need to support them."

The Jewish Community Council of Victoria implemented a similar policy weeks before the JBD's decision.