



## LGBTQ FAMILY Access Program TOOLKIT

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## **LGBTQ Access Program Toolkit Table of Contents**

How to use this Toolkit	
Introduction Letter	1
Agency Overview	2
Group Agreements	3
Activity Overview: Ice Breakers	4
Activity Overview: Statistics	6
Material: Statistics Cards	7
Handout: Quick Facts	9
Activity Overview: Term and Definitions	21
Handout: Glossary of Terms	23
Activity Overview: Values Clarification	26
Handout: Values Clarification Questionnaire	27
Materials: Values Clarification Signs	28
Activity Overview: Human Bingo	32
Handout: Human Bingo	35
Material: Prize for Winner	
Activity Overview: Tips Sheet for Providers	36
Handout: Tips Sheet for Providers	37
Handout: How LGBTQ Families are Formed	41
Activity Overview: Living in a Gay World Visualization	43
Activity Overview: Scenarios	45
Handout: Scenarios - Organizational Culture	46
Handout: Scenarios - Mental Health Providers	47
Activity Overview: Values Our Families DVD Activity	48
Overview: Practicing Responses to Difficult Questions	49
Handout: Practicing Responses to Difficult Questions	50
Sample Training Guide	58
Article: What Mother What Father?	64
Article: American Psychiatric Article	66
Our Family Coalition Booklist	70
Access Training Flyer	76
Access Training Request Form	77
Our Family Coalition Family Values Poster Order Form	78



## How to use this Toolkit

This toolkit was developed from research, trainings, feedback and observations on what service providers might find useful as they interact with LGBTQ Families. Service providers can use this Toolkit in its entirety to lead their own training or as a resource to address specific needs at their agency. It is organized sequentially: beginning with Ice Breaker activities, statistical information on LGBTQ Families and exercises to assist participants in uncovering their perspectives and knowledge of LGBTQ families. From that point the activities shift into tools that can be used at your service agency and more information to broaden participant's understanding.

Each Activity has an overview, instructional guide and information on the time and materials required for the activity to be carried out. Handouts accompany some of the activities and articles, resource guides and information on our organization complete the package. These items can be given to participants and staff to further their knowledge and provide them an avenue to connect with Our Family Coalition and the services we provide.

We hope this toolkit will support your work as you work to support LGBTQ Families.



Dear Provider:

Our Family Coalition is excited to offer you our Access Training Toolkit.

Our Family Coalition is the Bay Area's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) family organization. We are continually looking for new and inspiring ways to better serve LGBTQ headed families and the diverse communities in which we live, work, go to school and receive services, and are committed to providing information and resources to better support the rights and well-being of Bay Area LGBTQ headed families and prospective parents. Critical to this work is ensuring that LGBTQ families can access welcoming health and human services throughout the Bay Area.

Toward this end, over the past couple of years we have developed our Access Program, which provides trainings and technical assistance to help health care and service providers better serve LGBTQ families. We have found that training is a great way to start working on creating safe and welcoming services, and that providers often want more. This Toolkit contains information, training resources, and facilitator guides so that you can continue to build on the training we have provided for your organization, and to train new staff members. The materials are specifically geared toward helping you create safer and more inclusive spaces for LGBTQ families and their allies.

We are inspired by your organization's commitment to serving all families, and that you are interested in learning more about how to better serve our families. We hope the Toolkit will help continue your work in providing an environment and programming that is welcoming to all families.

We hope that our Toolkit along with continued collaboration and a commitment to community building will help further the work we all value.

Yours truly

Judy Appel

Executive Director



## Agency Overview

### Our Family Coalition is YOUR Family Organization

Our Family Coalition (OFC) Has over 700 member families, which include over 2,500 people, with thousands more participating in OFC's activities. This makes us the largest local lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) family organization in the country. Here is an overview of what we have to offer LGBTQ headed families and our allies:

**Social Events** Our Family Coalition hosts many events in both San Francisco and the East Bay where families can connect and have fun together. These events include picnics, excursions, LGBTQ Family Night at the Downtown Berkeley YMCA, the Family Garden at the San Francisco Pride Celebration and Sistahs Steppin' in Pride in Oakland, LGBTQ Family Weekend in Guerneville, and many more.

**School Advocacy Program** works with parents, teachers, administrators and others to create more welcoming schools for the children of LGBTQ headed households, and to break down anti-gay bias at an early age through our School Forums, parent advocacy groups and teacher trainings. We have also successfully helped write and pass school board policies that protect our families from harassment in schools.

**Peer Support Groups** Our support groups provide a forum for LGBTQ individuals to meet, explore shared concerns, receive assistance from their peers, and learn from experts. Our Regularly scheduled groups include Mamas & Papas, a Transracial Adoption group, a Transgender Parent group, a Prospective Parent group, and the brand new Mamas and Papas East Bay group. For those of you who prefer to meet online, we have three member listservs – our-moms-in-touch, our-dads-in-touch, and our family-in-touch.

**Access Program** We offer trainings at medical settings and social service agencies to institutionalize a better understanding of LGBTQ families so that these professionals can better serve us. We've produced a parent to parent resource guide, *Best of the Gay Bay*, of LGBTQ family friendly businesses and services in the Bay Area.

**Educational Workshops** Our educational workshops provide support and resources on a range of topics, including legal rights and protections, family building, coming out to your children, marriage equality, talking with your children about their origins, child development and more.

**Social Justice** We strive to increase visibility and achieve justice and full equality for LGBTQ families. Along with our families, we work with local, state and national coalitions to advocate for change on issues relevant to our families, including marriage equality and healthcare reform. In the media and in the political forums we work to improve public perception of LGBTQ families. Recently the details of our needs assessment were made public, bringing the spotlight in the media to the racial and economic diversity of our families.

**Information Referrals and Outreach** We publish a quarterly print newsletter to all of our members, and a bi-weekly e-newsletter to keep you informed about events, news and issues of interest to our community.

Headquarters: 870 Market Street, Suite 872, San Francisco, CA 94102  
 East Bay Office: 344 40th Street, Oakland 94609  
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# Group Agreements

## Overview

These group agreements are a guide to how the participants engage with one another and with what the training has to offer.

### Materials

- “Post-It” Posters Paper / Board and markers to write agreements

### Time Needed

5 minutes

## Steps

### Facilitator: Write group agreements on Board

- Respect
- Step Up, Step Back
- Confidentiality
- Try it on
- Turn off Technology
- Other Favorite Agreements to add?

### Facilitator: Review agreements with participants

- Respect: Respect of one another, content, and new ideas
- Step Up, Step Back: Ask participants who speak easily to step back and allow room for others & ask those who are less comfortable to speak in front of a group to step up
- Confidentiality: What is said in here generally stays in here
- Try it on: Try new ideas, concepts and information from today’s training

### Questions to Participants:

Does anyone have anything to add?

Can we agree all with these group agreements?

# Participant Introductions

## Overview

This is an icebreaker exercise to get the group talking; introducing themselves and getting to know another more. You may replace this with other icebreaker exercises.

### Time Needed

10-15 minutes

## Steps

Ask participants to introduce themselves in no specific order, and have them share:

1. Their name
  2. What their role is at the organization
  3. One thing the group can't tell by looking at them
- Facilitator Models the exercise and begins introductions
  - Go around the room and allow participants to share.
  - Thank participants for sharing.
  - Ask if anyone learned anything new or any surprises about their fellow participants?

## Facilitator Speaks:

When discussing our differences when it comes to identities and life experiences, it's important to remember you can't always "tell a book from its cover." When working with the LGBTQ community and their families, it's important to recognize you can't always "tell" who is LGBTQ parent and also might challenge our stereotype of what an LGBTQ person "looks like." Being inclusive of all families, including LGBTQ families, should be the standard we work towards and sustain. Discussing and implementing strategies that honor all families will strengthen our work and commitment to the whomever we serve.

# Statistics

## Overview

This can be used as an Icebreaker or as a way to introduce participants to facts about LGBTQ families locally and nationally. It is a way to combine introductions with beginning to unpack misconceptions and Build knowledge about LGBTQ people and families.

### Materials

- Statistics Cards
  - \*Cut each page in 1/2 so one Statistic appears on each half-You may want to print on cardstock

### Preparation

- Place Statistics sheets under or on top of several participant chairs, or in folders with other training materials

### Time Needed

10-15 minutes

## Steps

- Ask participants to check under their chair for a sheet of paper or card.
- Ask participants who find a sheet/card to stand up and introduce themselves and to share their Statistics info with the group

Sometimes there are more people than Statistics sheets/cards. In that case only those with the Statistic card will read it.

## Debrief

After the introductions and reading of the statistics take about 5 minutes to ask what if any of the facts were surprising to people.

There may be some questions. Attempt to answer them briefly, and let participants know you will address any unanswered questions throughout the training.

Move on to the next exercise.



Between 6 million and 10 million children of lesbian, gay, and/or bisexual parents currently live in the United States.

US Census Bureau of Household and Family Statistics, 2000.



In both Alameda and San Francisco Counties 69% of same gender couples with children are female and 31% are male.

US Census Bureau of Household and Family Statistics, 2000.



More than half of all African American, API and Latina/o same-gender couples between the ages of 25-55 yrs are raising children of their own. Ethnic minority same-gender couples are much more likely to be raising children than White same-gender couples (18%).

US Census Bureau of Household and Family Statistics, 2000.



Among California counties, Alameda has the highest rate of black same-gender couples (1.4 per 1,000 households)

US Census Bureau of Household and Family Statistics, 2000.



Among California counties, San Francisco County has the highest rate of API same-gender couples (2.2 per 1,000 households).

US Census Bureau of Household and Family Statistics, 2000.



The number of unmarried partner households has increased by 72% in the last decade to almost 5.5 million in 2000. These figures include both same-sex and different-sex couples.

US Census Bureau of Household and Family Statistics, 2000.



More than 100,000 children are adopted each year.

American Bar Association, 1987.



Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students hear anti-gay slurs such as "homo", "faggot" and "sissy" and average of about 26 times a day, or once every 14 minutes.

National Mental Health Association, 2002



Only 24% of all households with children are being raised by a husband and a wife.

ACLU



Same-gender couples live in 99.3% of all US counties.

US Census Bureau of Household and Family Statistics, 2000.



Over half of children placed into permanent homes through San Francisco's foster care system are placed into gay or lesbian headed families.

SF Department of Human Services



The average household income for same-gender parents in California is \$13,000 lower than the average household income for heterosexual married couples with children.

Williams Project, UCLA



## Quick Facts

- It is difficult to know exactly how many LGBT parents are raising children in the US, primarily because of the challenge in capturing the exact population of LGBT people. Usually the estimates range from **1 to 9 million children** being raised by LGBT parents, which is somewhere between **1% to 12% of all children**.
- The most current measurement tool is the **2000 Census** that offered the box "unmarried partners." The 2000 Census reported **594,391 same-sex households** - of those, 301,026 are male partners and 293,365 are female partners.

### Other 2000 Census results:

- Same-sex families live in **99.3%** of all counties in the United States.
  - One third of female partner households (**34.3%**) and one fifth of male partner households (**22.3%**) are raising children.
  - California has more lesbian and gay couples with children than any other state, and these families live in every county in California.
  - In both Alameda and San Francisco Counties **69%** of same gender couples with children are female and **31%** are male.
  - There are **12,463** children in San Francisco County that live with same-gender parents. There are **1.4** children per household and their average age is **8.4** years old.
  - There are **10,003** children in Alameda County that live with same-gender parents. There are **1.7** children per household and their average age is **6.2** years old.
  - More than half of all African American, API and Latina./o same-gender couples between the ages of **25-55 yrs** are raising children of their own (**43%, 45%, and 62%**, respectively). Ethnic minority same-gender couples are much more likely to be raising children than White same-gender couples (**18%**).
  - Among California counties, Alameda has the highest rate of black same-gender couples (**1.4** per 1,000 households).
  - Among California counties, San Francisco County has the highest rate of API same-gender couples (**2.2** per 1,000 households).
- Families with LGBT parents come in many shapes and family arrangements. They include families of all races, ethnic groups, socioeconomic status, and religions; and families living in all kinds of communities.
  - Many schools are either unsafe and/or unwelcoming for students with LGBT parents. In the California Safe Schools Coalition's 2003 Preventing School Harassment Survey, **91%** of students reported hearing anti-LGBT slurs at school. **Thirty-nine percent** of students surveyed said their school was unsafe for students with LGBT parents.

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# Definitions Exercise

## Overview

This exercise is a way for participants to share their knowledge and be educated about LGBTQ terms and definitions that are frequently used

### Materials

- Flip Chart or White Board
- Markers

### Preparation

- Prepare Chart / White board by writing the terms:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual  
Ally, Homophobia, Transgender  
Heterosexism, Queer

### Time Needed

20 minutes

## Steps

Definitions and labels are in a constant process of changing and growing—that's one of the things that is so exciting about this community!

Our belief is that people have the right to define themselves and there are no hard and fast rules about what language will work in every situation. There is a lot of the diversity within LGBT communities in terms of what language folks use and are comfortable with, for example the word "queer."

Share your own perspectives, acknowledge the complexity.

We encourage folks to keep up on definitions, and if you are curious about what a term means, ask.

We are going to go over some key definitions in a fun way, just so you have some more familiarity with these terms. That way when they come up it will be more comfortable. We also would like to add that labels/ definitions can be limiting. All people's sexuality can be seen by a general spectrum.

We will call out a definition and you can tell us what word we are defining from those on this page.

Debrief: Ask if there are any questions.

## Terms and definitions

**Lesbian**-refers to a woman who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to other women.

**Gay**-refers to a person who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to members of the same sex. Often used to refer to a man who is attracted to another man.

**Bisexual**-refers to a person who is attracted to members of both sexes.

**Transgender**-a term to describe people whose gender identity does not correspond to their birth-assigned sex and/or the stereotypes associated with that sex.

**Queer**- is an umbrella term used to describe LGBT people; it has been reclaimed by some LGBT people from its derogatory use by others and is used to express pride in being LGBT.

**Homophobia**-the irrational fear of feeling attraction for people of your same gender. Also, hatred towards people who are—or appear to be—LGBTQ.

**Ally**-a person who does not identify as LGBTQIQ but supports the rights of people who do identify as LGBTQIQ and speaks out against homophobia.

**Heterosexism** -The assumption that everyone or a particular person is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is "normal." It can be distinguished from homophobia in that it doesn't necessarily imply hostility towards other sexual orientations, merely a failure to account for their existence.



This term refers to a woman who is physically and/ or emotionally attracted to other women.



This term refers to a person who is attracted to members of  
both sexes.



This term refers to a person who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to members of the same sex (a woman might prefer to call herself Lesbian).



This is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity, gender characteristics or gender expressions cross traditionally accepted gender roles and includes intersex people and other gender non-conformists.



This is an umbrella term used to describe LGBT people; it has been reclaimed by some LGBT people from its derogatory use by others and is used to express pride in being LGBT.



This term refers to a person who supports you but who, for whatever reason, is not a potential member of your organization or coalition.



This term is often used to generally describe a strong negative bias toward lesbian, gay and bisexual people, but the term isn't inclusive in its origins and strict meaning so you may want to use anti-LGBT bias.



This term refers to the assumption that everyone or a particular person is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is “normal”. It can be distinguished from homophobia in that it doesn’t necessarily imply hostility towards other sexual orientations, merely a failure to account for their existence.



## Glossary of Terms

- Ally:** An ally is a person who supports you but who, for whatever reason, is not a potential member of your organization or coalition.
- Bi:** A slang term that refers to a bisexual person.
- Bias-Motivated Incident:** A bias-motivated incident is a non-criminal act (e.g., name-calling, verbal abuse, etc.) motivated by bias, hate, or prejudice towards another person's real or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability or gender.
- Bigotry:** Bigotry is prejudice and/or discrimination against one or all members of a particular group based on negative perceptions of their beliefs and practices or on negative group stereotypes.
- Bisexual:** Bisexual refers to a person who is attracted to members of both sexes.
- Coming Out:** Coming out is the process of recognizing and acknowledging non-heterosexual or transgender identity to oneself and then sharing it with others. Developmentally, many LGBTQ and questioning individuals initially pretend (actively or through silence) to be heterosexual and congruent. Coming out means dropping the secrecy and pretense and becoming more emotionally integrated. This usually occurs in stages and is a non-linear, life-long process.
- Cross-Dress:** To cross-dress is to wear clothing most often associated (in one's culture and historical timeframe) with people of the other gender.
- Derogatory:** Derogatory is an adjective used to describe offensive comments or slurs which make fun of someone's race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability or gender.
- Discrimination (an action):** Discrimination is the behavior that can follow prejudicial thinking. Discrimination is the denial of justice and fair treatment in many arenas, including employment, housing, and political rights.
- Gay:** The adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attractions are to people of the same sex. Gay is often used to describe men who are attracted to other men, but is also used as a term describing both men and women who are attracted to the same sex.
- Gender:** Gender covers a wide range of issues relevant to all people. It relates to femininity and masculinity and it includes the following pieces:
- Gender identity** - one's understanding or feeling about whether one is emotionally or spiritually female or male or both or neither, regardless of one's biological sex.

**Gender characteristics** - characteristics such as facial hair and vocal pitch.

**Gender expression** - the way a person expresses her or his gender, through gestures, movement, dress and grooming.

**Gender nonconformity** - means not expressing gender or not having gender characteristics or a gender identity that conforms to others' expectations. Much, perhaps most, of the harassment of LGBTQ students experience is related to gender and gender nonconformity.

**Gender queer** - a word people use to describe their own nonstandard gender identity, or used by those who do not conform to traditional gender norms.

<b>GSA:</b>	GSA is an abbreviation for Gay-Straight Alliance, an alliance of student dedicated to fighting homophobia on campus and improving the lives of LGBTQQ (Q=questioning) students.
<b>Hate Crime:</b>	A hate crime is a criminal act (e.g. graffiti, threatened violence, hitting, etc.) motivated by bias, hate, or prejudice towards another person's real or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability or gender.
<b>Heterosexism:</b>	The assumption that everyone or a particular person is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is "normal." It can be distinguished from homophobia in that it doesn't necessarily imply hostility towards other sexual orientations, merely a failure to account for their existence.
<b>Heterosexual:</b>	The adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attractions are to people of the opposite sex. Also: straight.
<b>Homophobia:</b>	Homophobia is a term that is often used generally to describe a strong negative bias toward lesbian, gay and bisexual people, but the term isn't inclusive in its origins and strict meaning, so you may want to use anti-LGBTQ bias.
<b>Homosexual:</b>	Outdated clinical term considered derogatory and offensive by many gay people. "Gay and/or "lesbian" are more commonly accepted terms to describe people who are attracted to members of the same sex.
<b>Intersexed:</b>	Intersexed is an adjective that describes a person who is born with genitals or chromosomes that are not clearly male or female. Avoid using this term; it is archaic and distancing. Though sometimes used to describe behavior, the term same-sex is preferable. When referring to people, the use of the term homosexual is considered derogatory.
<b>Lesbian:</b>	The adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attractions are to other women.
<b>LGBT:</b>	LGBT is the string of letters that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Some people use LGBTQ, to include youth who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity, or to identify Q for Queer. You might even see more letters on occasion: roll with it and ask what they stand for.

<b>Lifestyle:</b>	Lifestyle is an inaccurate term sometimes used to describe the lives of LGBTQ people. There is no gay lifestyle, just as there is no straight or heterosexual lifestyle.
<b>Outing:</b>	Exposing someone's sexual orientation or gender identity as being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender to others when that person is not open about it; in essence, "outing" someone from the closet.
<b>Prejudice (a feeling):</b>	Prejudice is pre-judging, making a decision about a person or group of people without sufficient knowledge. Prejudicial thinking is based on stereotypes. Prejudice is a feeling or attitude.
<b>Queer:</b>	Queer is an umbrella term used to describe LGBTQ people; it has been reclaimed by some LGBTQ people from its derogatory use by others and is used to express pride in being LGBTQ.
<b>Sex:</b>	A person's biological and anatomical identity.
<b>Sexual Orientation:</b>	Sexual orientation is the term that describes whether a person is attracted to members of the same sex (gay or lesbian), to members of the opposite sex (heterosexual), to members of both sexes (bisexual) or neither, Asexual.
<b>Sexual Preference:</b>	Avoid using this archaic term; it implies a casual choice. Sexual orientation is the correct term.
<b>Stereotype:</b>	An oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard for individual differences. Even positives stereotypes, such as "Asians are good at math and computers," have a negative impact.
<b>Transgender:</b>	Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity, gender characteristics, or gender expressions do not correspond to their birth-assigned sex and/or the stereotypes associated with that sex
<b>Transphobia:</b>	Transphobia is a term that is used to describe a strong negative bias toward transgender people. Using anti-LGBTQ bias can be more inclusive.

# Values Clarification

## Overview

This exercise gives an opportunity for participants to talk briefly about their values and beliefs in an anonymous way while “trying on” their peer’s beliefs.

### Materials

- Handouts with Statements
- Signs designating areas for Value Statements e.g. “Agree”
- Tape

### Preparation

- Copy handouts
- Copy Value Statements
- Post Value Statements around the room

### Time Needed

Setting up the Activity  
Debriefing

\*Note: Facilitator may use: 2, 3 or all 4 questions

The Statements are:

- Parents, not educators, should introduce terms like gay and lesbian.
- I am comfortable using words like gay and lesbian with the children and families I work with.
- Children should be raised by a man and a woman.
- I would not have any problem with my own child(ren) being gay.

The Answers are:

- Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree, and Disagree

## Steps

1. Explain the activity to the participants. Ask whether they have participated in a values clarification before.
2. Pass out handouts with statements. Instruct participants to: not write their name on the handout, review each statement and circle their first response, not to think about the answer too long and to turn their paper over once complete.
3. Once handouts are completed and you have collected them, shuffle them together and pass them out again. Explain to the group that they now have a handout of a peer. We are asking the participants to “try on” the answers of their peer. Ask participants to take turns volunteering to read of each statement to the larger group.
4. When the statement is read each person will walk towards the place in the room that reflects the answer on their sheet (Agree, Strongly Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree and Unsure). Ask the participants to answer why they answered they way they did. *Remind participants about our group agreements and the fact that their peers answered these statements.* Also remind them to align their responses with their handout.
5. Debrief the Activity: Thank the participants. Highlight their willingness to engage in the rewarding and challenging conversations that values clarification brings up and the opportunity the exercise gave to clarify other’s perspectives and where they want to grow.



## Values Clarification: Questions

**DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS PAGE  
ANSWERS ARE ANONYMOUS**

1 I am comfortable using words like gay and lesbian with the children and families I work with.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

2 Children should be raised by a man and a woman.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

3 I would not have any problem with my own child(ren) being gay.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

4 Parents, not educators, should introduce terms like gay and lesbian.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Disagree      Strongly Disagree



# Agree



# Disagree



**Strongly  
Agree**



# **Strongly Disagree**

# Human Bingo

## Overview

This exercise serves as a fun, interactive way to invite participants to meet each other, get to know one another a little bit and start learning about LGBT families and relevant resources.

The directions for Human Bingo are on the top of the Human Bingo sheet. If you have limited time, you might want to require that participants complete only one line. Just let people know that you are adapting based on the group—and they can use each person's name twice or fill two rows instead of the whole sheet.

### Materials

- Copies of Human Bingo Table/One per participant
- Writing utensil
- Prizes

### Preparation

Copy Human Bingo worksheets.

Make a plan to make space in the room for people to move around, preferably removing barriers like desks and chairs. Ensure that people with special physical needs will be able to participate in the activity. Make appropriate adaptations.

### Time Needed

Setting up the Activity: 5 minutes

Bingo/Moving Around: 10 minutes (often less)

Debrief: 15 minutes

## Steps

Explain the activity to the participants. See description at top of the Human Bingo Worksheet. It is helpful to read it out loud and to remind folks that they can only use each person's name twice. If you are co-facilitating, you might want to model for the group.

Depending on the size of the group, you can ask for people to get four in a row, or one or two rows.

Walk around the room, fill the spots, meet everyone.

When someone yells "BINGO!" bring the group back together and when the group is ready (people are often having exciting conversations at this time), debrief together.

Give prizes related to the activity (children's books, etc.)

*Debrief the Activity:* Ask and discuss the following questions with the group:

Which boxes were easy to fill?

Which were harder?

Why do you think that is?

# Human Bingo

\*Human Bingo can be used as a way to discuss the “Tips for an Inclusive Environment”. To do that, use the following guide.

\*The following pieces can go in any order, based on what comes up from the audience.

How about: “Has heard someone insulted with a homophobic term”? Or “Can name a stereotype about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, two spirit people”? Usually pretty easy, immediate. Anti-gay slurs are commonly accepted in public in general and children experience them daily in our schools.

Is it easier or harder to think of a stereotype of straight people? What about “one way homophobia hurts people who are straight”? Name bullying statistics and connect to gender. People are bullied and targeted for being perceived to be gay b/c their gender expression doesn’t match up with traditional expectations—many of those folks are straight. Straight parents’ worry and grief when their children come out. Lack of holistic relationships with friends and loved ones because of homophobia.

Have people worked with LGBTQ clients? How about with clients who have experienced language or cultural barriers? Name the strengths/diversity in the room. Communicating about sexual orientation and gender identity adds a new layer to cross cultural communication. The assumption that people need to label themselves to be “out” comes from mainstream/dominant LGBT cultures. People “come out” in different ways, and may choose not to label themselves at all.

What is the first image that comes to your mind when I say LGBT? (Usually it is of white upper middle class gay men). Why is that? The way that LGBT people are represented in mainstream media disappears the experience of LGBT people of color—and we talk about “people of color” and “LGBT” groups as if they are mutually exclusive! Hmmm....

Versus: “Can name 3 images of LGBT families in their environment” or “Can name a famous person you learned about in K-12 education who was identified as an LGBT person.” Usually this will have fewer hands. Note the difference—and the preponderance of negative messages LGBT people/families receive. In the current context it is normal to turn on the news and see a discussion about whether LGBT people have the right to exist...that is an intense message that is all over the mainstream news.

\*As you debrief the worksheet, it is helpful to ask participants for the answers and then refer to the tip sheet. This will help visual learners and engage folks in the group.

How about: “Has assumed someone was heterosexual”? Probably everyone...Connect to heterosexism in mainstream/dominant culture. Connect back to intention of training to uncover and build awareness of some of our “blind spots” (TIP #1)

How about “Can name 3 terms people use for being “LGBT” in different cultures?” Ask for examples from the audience and then refer to (TIP #2)

And...Can name three ways that LGBT people create families? Ask the audience to brainstorm (TIP #5)

“Has questioned or wondered about children in L/G families having role models of 2 genders”? (TIP #8)  
This is a common question.

# Human Bingo

Mention/summarize the research showing children of lesbian and gay parents do well psychologically, developmentally, etc. (TIP #10) This often impacts gay dads because people are often concerned about whether or not they are able to nurture children. Here, take a moment to feel the impact of that and ask people to imagine what that feels like, over and over again. (TB note: For me, this feels painful to let in and it is important to take a moment to acknowledge that emotion.) Adding another layer, notions of gender are complicated for folks who identify as transgender...

That last one is related to... "Knows 3 terms that LGBT families might be likely to use to refer to caregiver/parent roles"? Ask the group to name them. (TIP #3). Pay attention to language families use and mirror that language. In two mom families the second mom, or the mom who is not perceived as the biological mom (both moms are "real"! ) is often marginalized and not treated as a "real" parent.

How about "Can you name 3 images of LGBT families they have seen in their environment (anywhere) recently"? What were the cultural backgrounds of the people in those images? (TIP #4) Name the impact of invisibility, and the potential of including images of diverse LGBT families in your settings.

What were some of the legal rights that LGBT people don't have? Name a few. Over 1000 legal rights go along with marriage. What about second parent adoption related to financial resources and access? We may have that legal right, and others, but need to "buy" it by hiring a lawyer, and that means everyone does not have access to all the legal rights.

Can remember wanting a toy or article of clothing but was told it was "not for boys" or "not for girls." People who are transgender have experienced those messages in intense and consistent ways. In terms of welcoming transgender people it is essential to use the pronoun they choose and to respect their right to go into the bathroom that matches their gender. It is also important to have unisex bathrooms for safety, which is related to policy.

Ask for any other comments about the exercise, thank the participants for their sharing and transition to the next activity.



## Human Bingo!

We are going to get up and move around! The purpose of this game is to get to know the other people in the group while filling in as many boxes as possible. Read the description in each box and then ask a colleague if it applies to them. If it does, you can write their name in that box. Be sure to ask them how to spell it. Your job is to fill in ALL the boxes, linking a DIFFERENT person with each box. That means you can use each person's name only ONCE!

When you have filled two rows of boxes, yell "BINGO!"

### FIND SOMEONE WHO:

Knows the name of a religious leader who supports LGBTQ rights.	Can name 3 terms people use for being "LGBTQ" in different cultures and/or languages.	Knows 3 terms that LGBTQ children might use to refer to their same-sex parents or guardians.	Can remember wanting a toy or article of clothing but was told it was "not for boys" or "not for girls"
Has heard someone insulted with a homophobic term.	Works in an organization where the forms are gender neutral, and if serve children the forms do not ask for "mother's" and "father's" names.	Has questioned or wondered about children in lesbian and gay headed families needing both male and female role models?	Can name three legal rights that LGBTQ people don't have.
Can name three ways that LGBT people create families.	Can identify one way in which homophobia hurts people who are straight.	Can name 3 images of LGBTQ families they have seen in their environment (anywhere) recently.	Has clients who are "out" as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, two spirit or questioning?
Has assumed someone was heterosexual.	Serves clients who have experienced language or cultural barriers in accessing services?	Can name a famous person they learned about in K-12 education who was identified as an LGBTQ person.	Can name a stereotype about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or two spirit people.

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# Tips for Maintaining an Inclusive Environment

## Overview

This exercise provides practical and valuable tips for organizations to incorporate in order to maintain an environment that is welcoming and inclusive for LGBTQ families and individuals. The tips shared are discussed in small groups and from this exercise an organizational action plan can be created so participants can leave with steps to create a more inclusive environment for their LGBTQ clients.

### Materials

- Tip Sheets for Participants
- White Board or Poster Board to capture responses

### Time Needed

30 minutes

## Steps

Pass out Tip Sheets to each participant.

Count Participants off into 5-10 small groups based on the number of participants present, adjust number of group members accordingly.

Assign each group one to two tips (depending on how many groups are formed)

Each participant will work in a small group and review their designated tip(s).

Each group will review the following questions in their small groups:

1. How would you incorporate this tip at your site?
2. What would be the reward?
3. What would be the challenges?
4. How would you address these challenges?

After each group has 10 minutes to discuss, we will review in a larger group and chart out the strategies of incorporating the presented tip into their work.



## Tips for Maintaining an Inclusive Environment for LGBTQ Parents, Caregivers and Their Families

1. **Don't assume heterosexuality.** In the United States there are more heterosexual people than lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBTQ) people and the education curriculum in this country supports heterosexuality as the norm. When coming from this foundation, it is common to assume heterosexuality or "straight" identity in others. This is especially true for people who do not fit into common preconceived notions of what LGBTQ people look or act like: effeminate men and masculine women. Also, many LGBTQ parents and caregivers are single, so it is important to remember that if you are serving a single parent or caregiver, they may well be LGBTQ.

One way to let your clients know that you do not assume that they are heterosexual is to adopt neutral language that is both welcoming to your LGBTQ clients and your heterosexual clients. For example, ask your client if he or she has a spouse or a partner instead of a husband or wife. Additionally, it is important not to think that just because someone is transgender that they identify as lesbian or gay. There is a difference between "sexual orientation" and "gender identity." "Sexual orientation" is a term that describes whether a person is attracted to a member of the same sex (gay or lesbian), to members of the opposite sex (heterosexual), or to members of both sexes (bisexual). "Gender identity," on the other hand, describes a person's understanding or feeling about whether one is emotionally or spiritually female or male, regardless of one's biological sex. Some transgender individuals are heterosexual. A glossary of these and other terms is attached to help you understand words or phrases that might be new to you.

2. **LGBTQ people and families are very diverse and express their sexual orientation in many different ways.** There are great benefits to acknowledging the cultural diversity that exists within the Bay Area. Cultural mores or the accepted customs and rules of a particular social group may influence how individuals and communities view homosexuality. Remember that people can be "out" in different ways—privately, personally and publicly. It is always important to (1) get accurate information about what a particular groups' or community' views are, (2) to acknowledge that there is a diversity of beliefs and opinions within any one group, (3) to keep an open mind, and (4) not make generalizations about people based on their race, ethnicity or cultural backgrounds. There are numerous organizations in the Bay Area who focus on certain racial, ethnic and cultural groups and can help keep you informed. Some of these include the Bay Area Native American Two-Spirits, Proyecto Contra SIDA Por VIDA, Nia Collective, API Family Pride and Jewish Family & Children's Services.



## Tips for Maintaining an Inclusive Environment for LGBTQ Parents, Caregivers and Their Families

**3. Take language cues from parents and/or youth.** Parents/caregivers and youth will often give cues about how to discuss the child's parents, donor, biological or birth parents, stepparents, or other caregivers or family members. Listen to hear if a parent uses certain language with their children or with you in reference to their families, and then be careful to use that language from then on. For example, if you hear an adoptive parent talk about the child's "birth mom" or a family who utilized assisted insemination use the term "donor," adopt that language in the future. If you are working with LGBTQ parents or caregivers and their kids, it is very important to know who is "Mommy" or "Mama" and "Daddy," or "Papa" or whatever other names the child or children call their parents or caregivers. By simply using the language used by people within a family, family members will feel an environment is welcoming.

**4. Have materials that represent same-sex families.** It is our job as providers to make the environment where we offer services feel safe and inclusive to all families. It is important that the earliest points of contact with an agency demonstrate LGBTQ friendliness. One way to do this is by making sure that materials (posters, flyers, etc.) in your agency include images of LGBTQ families. In print these points of contact include periodical advertisements, web pages, yellow pages ads, and brochures. Demonstration of LGBTQ friendliness may be as simple as the phrase "LGBTQ friendly" in small type. If you offer books for kids, make sure to sprinkle in a couple of books with LGBTQ characters, and if you have parenting books, include some books specifically targeted at LGBTQ parents and caregivers. If you offer training, include examples or scenarios involving LGBTQ families in your curriculum. Our Family Coalition is one resource for such materials. For the same reason, intake staff (people who make appointments over the phone, as well as receptionists and office staff) need to be LGBTQ friendly. While they may not need to reiterate phrases used in print materials, they do need to respond with cultural competence to potential LGBTQ clients.

**5. Be informed about the various ways that LGBTQ families are created.** How do LGBTQ people have kids? If you are asking yourself this question, you are not alone. Work on feeling comfortable asking questions of parents, taking care not to ask inappropriate questions in the earshot of children. If you are asking questions of children or youth, make sure to ask them in a developmentally appropriate way, checking in first with the parents when possible. For example, given the context you might ask a child of three who takes care of him or her, while more specific questions about the family's situation might be more appropriate when talking to older children. To learn more about how LGBTQ people create their families, see Our Family Coalition's Primer on *How LGBTQ Headed Families are Formed*.



## Tips for Maintaining an Inclusive Environment for LGBTQ Parents, Caregivers and Their Families

**6. Have spaces on your forms that are inclusive of LGBTQ parents and caregivers and same-sex families.** Whenever possible have gender-neutral spaces on your forms for identifying the names of parents, caregivers or couples. This is easy to do and sends a welcoming message to LGBTQ clients and clients from diverse or “nontraditional” family structures. For example, instead of “mother” and “father”, forms can offer two spaces for “parent/caregiver” or “1st Adult” and “2<sup>nd</sup> Adult”. Many families, be they LGBTQ headed or blended families – have more than two parents in them. To allow you to capture information about all of the important adults in a child’s family, it is a good practice to allow room for more than two adult parents/ caretakers on your forms.

**7. Be accepting.** Communicating to a family that you accept them is the first step in building the trust that will lead to the most effective provision of services. If you have people on your staff who have a difficult time accepting LGBTQ people as parents, invest in a competency training to help them address their feelings/ beliefs in a safe environment and help them become more sensitive to LGBTQ clients. It is important to acknowledge that while you can not insist that staff embrace homosexuality, it is critical that their behavior be professional, warm and welcoming. Conversely, it is important to acknowledge that while it is OK to make honest mistakes, it is also important that providers be thoughtful have the intention to be inclusive. Remember -- clients will likely be able to tell who is making an honest effort to be sensitive and that this will more often than not make all the difference. If someone with a masculine-sounding voice calls to make an appointment, and uses a feminine name, staff need to complete the business task (schedule the appointment) without judgment.

**8. Be mindful of discriminating against Dads, they are nurturers too.** Like any other parent, gay and transgender dads who are raising children, are their child’s caregiver. Many societal views about women being “natural” nurturers, and men being good disciplinarians and providers results in prejudice against fathers as loving and caring parents. It is important that we challenge any assumptions we may have about who can be nurturing and who can provide children with what they need to grow up happy and healthy. For example, dads or male caregivers can groom and care for their child(ren) and moms or female caregivers can discipline and provide economically for theirs. For persons who identify as transgender, notions of maleness and femaleness are further complicated. Follow the client’s clues regarding gender pronouns and recommend services appropriate to their gender. Things that might seem small, like making sure to point out the woman’s bathroom to a transgender male to female makes a big difference in their feeling at ease in your agency.



## Tips for Maintaining an Inclusive Environment for LGBTQ Parents, Caregivers and Their Families

- 9. Have agency policies and procedures that address sexual orientation and gender identity.** A commitment to LGBTQ people (both clients and staff) can further be realized by having organizational policies that respect diversity. A few suggestions on how to do this include (1) hiring a diverse staff that includes LGBTQ identified people and supports them in being “out”, (2) having an anti-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, (3) providing domestic partner benefits for employees and (4) being committed to cultural competency trainings.
- 10. Remember that credible research demonstrates that children raised in same-sex families do as well as children raised in heterosexual homes.** Children raised by same-sex couples do every bit as well developmentally as children raised by heterosexuals. Studies have shown no significant difference in the areas of mental health, coping skills, peer relationships, or general maturation process. For a detailed summary of the research findings, with bibliography, please consult the website of the American Psychological Association: [www.apa.org/pi/parent.html](http://www.apa.org/pi/parent.html).
- \* Contact us or others for help and support.** If you are unsure of how to handle a situation, please do not hesitate to contact us at Our Family Coalition at 415-981-1960. If we can't help you, we will do our best to direct you to someone who can.



## How LGBTQ Headed Families are Formed

LGBTQ headed families are created in a myriad of ways. Although not an exhaustive list, following are the most common ways that LGBT families are formed.

- **CHILDREN FROM PREVIOUS STRAIGHT RELATIONSHIPS:** In some cases, people currently in homosexual relationships were formally in a heterosexual relationship. The new parent or stepparent may now be a full parent to the child, or may not, and the child may or may not have connections to their birth mother or father. Children of transgender parents might also have been conceived before a transgender parent transitioned gender. A majority of all LGBTQ families are formed through previous heterosexual relationships.
- **ADOPTION:** Many LGBT families are created through adoption. Adoptions can be (1) public foster adoptions (through the county) (2) private domestic adoptions or (3) international adoptions. The experiences of the families who go through these various adoption processes vary. It is important to note that trans-racial adoptions are common in the LGBT community (adoptions in which a parent or parents are a different race from their adopted child(ren)). In fact, multiple races and/or multiracial individuals can sometimes comprise a single family. Thus, try not to make assumptions about the race of either a child or parent.
- **SPERM DONOR INSEMINATION:** Sperm banks provide a list of donors for couples to choose from. Some donors are “known donors” and a child can contact him when he or she is 18 years old. Others are “anonymous donors” and the donor’s identity is not accessible to the child. Another type of “known donor” is when lesbians ask people they know to become donors and then the parties work out the relationship (both personal and legal) between the donor and the child. In some cases, there is an “uncle” type relationship, and sometimes the donor is called dad. Non-birth parents often legally adopt a child born by their partner.

How the insemination is done (and why someone may choose that method) varies, including:

- ◊ Having sex with a man, either someone they know or a stranger, with the intent to get pregnant.
  - ◊ Alternative insemination, where the sperm is either inserted into the vagina, or directly into the uterus (called intrauterine insemination) either at home or at a clinic.
  - ◊ In-vitro fertilization (IVF), where a fertilized embryo is implanted in the woman’s uterus.
- **FOSTER CARE:** Children are sometimes placed in the temporary care of a foster family as the result of problems or challenges within the birth family, or while critical elements of an adoption are being completed. These children are a part of the public child welfare system and a social worker from Human Services Agency will be involved in their case. Parents and caregivers have to be licensed by the county to be foster parents. Special services are often available to help meet the needs of children in foster care.
  - **KINSHIP CARE:** Children may live with family other than their parents in a “kinship care” situation, and may or may not be a part of the public foster care system.
  - **CO-PARENTING:** Here, either a man and a woman, or two couples, agree to parent together. The child is often genetically related to one of the moms and the dad, but a co-parenting arrangement could be developed via adoption as well.



## How LGBTQ Headed Families are Formed

- **SURROGACY:** Some gay men find a woman who can carry a child for them. The woman is generally identified and paid to carry the child with the help of an agency. Commonly, the child is the biologic product of an egg either of the surrogate mother or another woman and the sperm of one of the fathers.
- **DONOR EGG:** Some women have some of their eggs surgically removed, inseminated outside of their body, and have the resulting embryo(s) transferred to their partner. Here, the birth mother is not the genetic mother, so questions about medical history would more appropriately be directed to the genetic mother. If a lesbian couple uses a donor egg not belonging to either partner, the donor may not be referred to as a “mother” at all, but as a “donor.”
- **TRANSGENDER:** Like other gay, lesbian, bisexual, or straight headed families, transgender people may have children through a variety of means, including kinship care, adoption, donor insemination, sperm donation, pregnancy, surrogacy, and/or birth of a child before coming out as transgender. Transgender women (male-to-female) may decide to parent a child using their own sperm. If their reproductive systems may be impacted by surgical transition, they can save their sperm pre-transition so that they can biologically parent a child in the future. Transgender men (female-to-male) may choose to become pregnant if they have their uterus, or they may save their eggs for their partner or surrogate to carry. There are also some parents who identify as genderqueer or otherwise outside the confines male/female terminology.

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# Living in a Gay World: Visualization

## Overview

This exercise invites people to imagine being straight in a gay world. For straight-identified people it provides an opportunity to have a powerful perspective-taking experience of what it is like to live as an lesbian, gay or bisexual person in a straight, heterosexist and homophobic world. For LGB-identified people it names some of the discrimination that people live with on a daily basis.

### Materials

- The Visualization

### Time Needed

Setting up the Activity: 2 minutes

Reading the Activity: 7 minutes

Debriefing: 5 minutes

## Steps

1. Introduce the activity. Ask people to sit comfortably in their chair, arms and legs uncrossed. Then ask people to close their eyes and bring their attention to their breath. Take three deep breaths together and then begin the exercise:
2. Read: The attached visualization
3. Debrief the activity:

Guide participants to take a moment to sit with the feelings that came up for you in that exercise....what kind of insights came to you during the exercise? We have time to share three before the break.

Acknowledge that the writers chose not to include transgender families in the visualization. This exercise focused on sexual orientation (who you are attracted to) vs. gender identity (the gender you identify as), which are two separate issues. We could do a whole other visualization to help us understand the experience of someone who is trans. Check out the definitions of sexual orientation and gender identity on the break and come back with questions!

## Living in a Gay World: Visualization

Okay, we are going to begin. First, please close your eyes. For the purpose of this exercise, imagine that you are heterosexual, meaning that you form your primary loving and sexual relationships with people of the other sex. In your society it is illegal for people of different sexes to get married, and it is not acceptable for them to raise children together. All the couples you see in public are same-sex couples. Women date women and men date men.

Everywhere you look you see same-sex couples. In public it is not acceptable for people of different sexes to express affection for one another. Hugs are okay sometimes, but even when you hug someone of a different sex you get strange looks.

All the billboards and advertisements you see feature women loving women and men loving men. You have to change the words of love songs so they apply to you. In fact the last Valentine's Day you couldn't find a card for your partner because all of the cards were for gay or lesbian couples.

You grew up with two primary homes, which is how most people have grown up. Your fathers lived together next door to your mothers. You grew up in a loving environment. There were issues in your family, like most, but mostly you appreciate your upbringing and the gifts your parents gave to you.

Ever since you can remember, you have felt there was something strange or different about you. Even though everyone talked about marrying and dating someone of the same sex, you never felt interested in that kind of relationship. You remember one experience like it was yesterday. When you were 5 years old you were playing at school, pretending to marry someone of the opposite sex. You were happily playing along when the teacher came over and said: "You can't do that. That's wrong. The only way people can ever get married is if they are the same sex. Don't play that way or I will talk to your parents." The shame and confusion you felt then floods over you now as you remember it.

When you were in your teens you went through major depressions and never told anyone that you were questioning your sexuality. You went to your dances and went on dates with people of the same sex, and would come home and cry because you didn't feel attracted to them at all. You tried to force yourself to be attracted to others of the same sex, but it just made you feel more and more depressed. You were very preoccupied with suicide and wrote in your journal about your fear that you were heterosexual.

Now you are in your late twenties. You have had a monogamous relationship with your other sex partner for 3 years. You have a two-year old son and another baby on the way. As you negotiate the world with your son, you are having many new experiences. People at the doctor's office always ask you where your partner is and look at you blankly when you introduce your real partner.

People have also asked you how your child will have enough role models in their home and if raising them in a heterosexual household will be harmful to their development. Your capacity as a parent is constantly being scrutinized. Most of the places you go only have pictures of lesbian and gay families and books about lesbian and gay families. Some places say they are accepting, but people seem pretty uncomfortable with you and your family. You are dealing with it, but you are worried about how the invisibility of your family structure and the discomfort people feel with you will affect your children.

Although it's a struggle at times just to be yourself, there are many things you enjoy about being heterosexual. The heterosexual community is small, but supportive. There is a vibrant subculture, complete with it's own language and cultural norms. Your friends that you have "come out" with you are like family. Together you all dream of a world where you and your family are seen for what you truly are...A FAMILY without question.

# Scenarios

## Overview

This activity allows participants to review possible scenarios that could occur in their workplace and reflect on how they might respond to the situation and consider various strategies to best serve clients they may encounter with similar needs. We have included two sets of Scenarios: one focused on organizational culture and one directed toward mental health providers.

### Materials

- Scenarios Handout
- Easel or White Board to chart responses
- Writing utensils for charting

### Preparation

- Set-up board to capture Strategies

### Time Needed

35 minutes

## Steps

- Choose the set of Scenarios most appropriate for the group being trained.
- Have participants count off numbers 1-4 to create 4 groups.
- Hand out scenarios.
- Instruct them as follows:
  - We are now going to have the opportunity to review a few scenarios as a large group. I am going to ask for volunteers to read aloud to the group. After the volunteer has read through the scenario, consider the scenario within your smaller group and think about the following questions:
    1. How would you respond in this situation?
    2. What are the challenges, if any?
    3. What are additional strategies on responding to this scenario? (Chart these)

Thank everyone for their teamwork and strategies and invite them to take them with them to their site.



## Scenarios: Organizational Culture

1 Alexis, an African American 8-year-old, was adopted by her two highly successful, professional dads (one white, one African American) two years ago. The dads brought her in because she has been extremely withdrawn, anxious, and acting out at school ever since she came to their family. She is very attached to both dads, and is often clingy. They thought this would change as she adjusted to the family, but now they are concerned. She had a history of multiple placements previously. The parents are hoping to get your opinion as to whether this has to do with her history or the fact that she has two dads and no mom in this family, and are eager to hear how they can best help her. How would you work with Alexis and her dads?

2 You are a staff member at a family resource center. You are in the lobby when Nancy and Rachel and their two children enter the center. They ask the receptionist for an intake form and Rachel completes the paperwork while Nancy feeds snacks to their children. When Rachel returns the completed form to the receptionist, the receptionist asks Rachel to re-do the form. When Rachel asks why she needs to re-do form, the receptionist replies the father's information was excluded. When Rachel explains that their family has two mothers, the receptionist responds that all clients are required to supply this information. When Rachel reiterates that a father is not part of their family structure, the receptionist rolls her eyes and exhales "Okay".

3 Hector, a barely-5-year-old kindergartener, came to see you because his two working-class dads were concerned that he was having behavioral issues at home and at school. The dads, who were both raised in strictly disciplined families, took the approach of more consistent limit-setting at home plus rewards for getting good reports at school. Hector has been extremely well-behaved in therapy for the past few months, with little bits of verbal and artistic expression of some monster and superhero imagery. Now his dads are looking into adopting another boy, and are happy to report that Hector is excited to get a baby brother. How would you work with Hector, his dads and his future sibling?

4 A new staff member, Stephanie, has recently begun working at your center. By the end of her first week with your center, she placed various art work in her office space. Returning from lunch, you and a co-worker pass Stephanie at her desk and ask who created the art. Stephanie replies "My partner Sara and our son Dylan." As you and your co-worker walk back to your office, your co-worker whispers to you "Did she say her partner and son? Geez, I really feel sorry for her son, and wouldn't that be a problem for our clients"?

5 During a work lunch, your staff is having a discussion about a new family who attended a family support group. Your supervisor asked if one of the parents who attended was a man or woman, your supervisor couldn't tell. Your supervisor goes on to say it is getting more and more difficult to "tell" who's a man and who's a woman these days. Your supervisor concludes with "It's a real shame".



## Scenarios: Mental Health Providers

**1** Luís, an 11-year-old boy who was adopted 3 years ago to a single lesbian mom, came to see you because of trouble concentrating in school, which has since improved a lot. A few months ago, the mom's girlfriend, Lily, whom Luís loves, moved in with them. From the beginning they've been very clear with Luís that they are "lesbians" and "girlfriends" and are out to Luís' teacher.

Before Luís' appointment today, his mother leaves you a phone message: "Luís was assigned a family project -- he's supposed to do a picture of who lives in our house and tell the whole class about us, but he doesn't want to put Lily in the picture. He says then people will know we're lesbians. I told him that that's their problem and he should put her in the picture, but maybe I should've butt out... Please talk to him about this!" How would you handle this with Luís? With his mom and/or Lily?

**2** Alexis, an African American 8-year-old, was adopted by her 2 highly successful, professional dads (one white, one African American) 2 years ago. The dads brought her in because she has been withdrawn and anxious at school ever since she came to their family. She is very attached to both dads, and is often clingy. They thought this would change as she adjusted to the family, but now they are concerned. She had a history of multiple placements previously. The parents are hoping to get your opinion as to whether this has to do with her history or the fact that she has 2 dads and no mom in this family, and are eager to hear how they can best help her. How would you work with Alexis and her dads?

**3** Katrina, a willful and verbal 7-year-old, has had her 2 politically active moms since she was 8 months old. Her parents are friends with all configurations of families, and Katrina may not even realize that there's anything less common about her family. Today she comes in and draws a picture of her moms kissing. Then she says to you pointedly, "That's gross, right?" When you inquire where this idea came from, she says, "That's what Aidan said about the picture of my moms on our refrigerator, and told everyone at school about it!" How would you work with this issue with Katrina? Her mom calls later, as well, to discuss "recent teasing at school" and ask your advice.

**4** Hector, a barely-5-year-old kindergartener, came to see you because his 2 working-class dads were concerned that he wasn't able to sit still in class. The dads, who were both raised in strictly disciplined families, took the approach of more consistent limit-setting at home plus rewards for getting good reports at school. Hector has been extremely well-behaved in therapy for the past few months, with little bits of verbal and artistic expression of some monster and superhero imagery. Now his dads are looking into adopting another boy, and are happy to report that Hector is excited to get a baby brother. How would you work with Hector and his dads?

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# Value Our Families: Film & Dyad Questions

## Overview

We are going to watch a movie which is going to give us an opportunity to hear from bay area children who have LGBT parents and what their experience has been like in elementary school.

The questions below are used to debrief after watching the “Value Our Families” film. The participant responses become next steps for the organization’s on-going education and action.

### Materials

- Flip chart with Questions
- Flip chart to capture responses

### Preparation

- Set-Up DVD Player to play film

### Time Needed

20-25 Minutes including time to watch film

## Steps

Watch “Value Our Families” DVD

- Participants get in pairs and review the questions with one another

Each person in the pair will have the opportunity to address each question.

- What barriers did families face in the film?
- What the barriers do you think families may face at your organization?
- How do you think you can address those barriers?

Allow 2-3 minutes per question and when finished re-group

Facilitator will capture responses on a flip chart.

This chart becomes the organization’s Action Steps for future work.

# Practicing Responses to Difficult Questions

## Overview

This activity allows participants to practice responding to questions a child or adult might ask about LGBTQ families, family structure or identities. It allows participants to engage with one another in a role-play style to practice potentially addressing these questions with children of various ages or adults with varying degrees of understanding around LGBTQ related topics.

### Materials

- Handouts for post-activity review
- Easel or White Board to capture participants debriefing reflections

### Preparation

- Set-up chairs in two Concentric Circles (The outer circle facing inward and the inner circle facing outward)

### Time Needed

45-60 minutes

This resource was created to assist educators. You may need to adapt some of the responses to more appropriately fit your organizations clients and services.

It may be difficult to articulate about these topics if they haven't been discussed before so this practice allows participants to feel comfortable enough to try out the new vocabulary and language that may initially feel awkward and uncomfortable.

## Steps

- Have participants count off by twos
- Have all the “ones” form the inner circle facing out, and have all of the “twos” form the outer circle outside the “ones” facing in.
- The facilitator reads a question and all the “ones” have one minute to share their answer with the “twos”.
- Before reading the next question, the people in the outside circle, the “twos” move one person to the right. The facilitator then reads a new question. This time to “twos” share their answer with their partner.
- Continue shifting the circle and answering questions in this way. Take some time in between questions to ask for a few responses to be shared with the full group.
- Close the activity by asking the group to reflect on all the response they have offered and heard. Ask them if there are any overall lessons or strategies that stand out to them. Record these strategies on an easel paper or white board.

*This exercise taken from the Welcoming Schools Program, A project of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation.*





## Practicing Responses to Student's and Parent's / Guardian's Questions about LGBTQ Topics:

### Have you ever considered how you might respond?

These are some things to think about as you respond to students' or parents'/guardians' questions. Included in italics are some sample responses.

#### 1. **“What does ‘gay’ mean?”** (When talking with a first-grader? When talking with a fifth-grader?)

A discussion with elementary-age students about the meanings of “gay” or “lesbian” is a discussion about love and relationships. You can just clarify that people love each other in different ways. Some women love and want to be partners with a man and some women love and want to be partners with a woman. It can be helpful to give concrete examples, such as “Tanya and Angela love each other and they want to be family to each other.”

Sample responses:

- *A person who loves, in a very special way, someone who is the same sex. For example, a gay man wants to be involved with and love another man.*
- *The word “gay” refers to a man who falls in love with another man in a romantic way or a woman who falls in love with another woman in a romantic way. Sometimes people use the word just to refer to a man who loves another man in a romantic way. “Gay,” however, can refer to both men and women.*

#### 2. **“What does ‘lesbian’ mean?”** (When talking with a first-grader? When talking with a fifth-grader?)

Sample responses:

- *A woman who loves another woman in a very special way.*
- *A woman who wants to be partners with and make a family with another woman.*
- *A woman who wants to be in a romantic relationship with another woman.*

#### 3. **“What does ‘bisexual’ mean?”**

Sample response:

- *The word ‘bisexual’ refers to people of either sex who fall in love in a romantic way with members of the same or another sex.*

#### 4. “How does someone know if they are gay? Aren’t they born that way?”

People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender often say they may have felt different when they were younger but that they didn’t identify with being gay until they were a teenager or older. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, “Sexual orientation probably is not determined by any one factor but by a combination of genetic, hormonal and environmental influences. In recent decades, biologically based theories have been favored by experts.” They also note, “Sexual orientation is usually established during early childhood.”

Sample responses:

- *Some people may realize they are gay when they are teenagers, while others may not figure it out until they are much older.*
- *Being gay has to do with a feeling deep inside of you. People don’t know for sure. Scientists have not been able to agree about why some people are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. However, most scientists believe that it is just a part of who you are when you are born.*

#### 5. “Are there any people of color who are gay?”

Sample response:

- *Yes. The media may often focus on white people who are gay. However, there is a long history of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in communities of color. For example, Bayard Rustin, who worked very closely with and helped out Martin Luther King Jr., was in fact a gay man. Then, there is B.D. Wong, a Chinese-American actor who is on TV and in movies and theater He was the voice for Colonel Shang in Mulan, Comedienne Wanda Sykes, Director Ang Lee, Writer, James Baldwin, and many more. Recently, Lupe Valdez was elected sheriff in Dallas County, Texas. Finally, Beyonce was raised by her mother and father yet her gay uncle helped raised her as well. Showing the dynamics of what’s considered a ‘primary family’ does not only consist of a mother and father.*

#### 6. “How can she have two moms? Which one is the real one?”

If you have a child with two dads or two moms in your classroom, it is helpful to know how his or her parents talk about their family. This will help you respond to other students’ questions.

Sample response:

- *They both are. Both moms take care of her and love her. There are all kinds of families. Some have two moms, some have two dads, some have one mom or dad and some have a mom and a dad. Some children are raised by other caring adults such as grandparents, other relatives or guardians. What’s important is to have adults who love and care for you.*

#### 7. “How can he have two dads? Don’t you need a mom and a dad to make a baby?”

In most elementary grades you can steer the answer to a discussion of family and say something like:

*Children come into families in many different ways – sometimes through birth, sometimes through adoption. His dads really wanted to have children, so they adopted him. Children are raised in many different ways. Some have two dads, some a mom*

and a dad. What's important is to have adults who love and care for you.

In older elementary grades, a question like this may come up in a "family life" lesson as it could also refer to how babies are made. It is better not to avoid the question. However, you can answer it simply that you do need an egg and a sperm to make a baby. Then, you could move on to children being raised in different kinds of families. If it is not in the health curriculum, the biological issue needs to be discussed at home.

### **8. You overhear a student saying to another, "That's so gay!"**

It's not OK to use "gay" as put-downs or in any negative way. Don't ignore it. Many children use the word "gay" to mean "stupid" or "weird" because that is the only way they have heard it used. Often children don't know what it really means. This is a good time to take the opportunity to explore that.

Sample responses:

- *It is not OK to use that phrase as a put-down in our school.*
- *It is not OK to use the word "gay" as a put-down or to mean something is bad.*
- *Remember, we don't use put-downs in this class. When you use the word "gay" as a put down it is hurtful.*
- *Do you know what "gay" means?*

### **9. "My grandma says it's wrong for two women to have children."**

People have lots of different ideas about families. Your grandma is not the only one who thinks that. There are many kinds of families. Some have a mom and a dad. Some have two moms. Some have one mom. In this school we respect all families that love and care for their children. Making sure children are well-cared-for is what is important. I have met all kinds of healthy, happy families.

### **10. "What if my religion says it is wrong to be gay?"**

Schools include people with many different religious beliefs. Some religious organizations support inclusion of LGBTQ people, and some don't. The role of schools is not to get everyone to agree but to foster a climate where there is respect for the diversity of beliefs and families within a community.

Respect is built by acknowledging the diversity in the community, promoting opportunities for community dialogue and allowing the diversity of families to be visible within the school. Most people can agree that it is appropriate for schools to teach kindness and mutual respect for everyone's beliefs.

### 11. “Angela’s mom and dad just got divorced and now her dad is involved with a man. What’s that all about?”

Sample response:

- *When children’s parents get divorced, sometimes their parents will get involved with other people. Sometimes that other person is of the same gender. Maybe Angela’s dad knew that he was attracted to (or liked) men before. Maybe he didn’t. The important thing is that no matter whom he gets involved with, he still loves Angela, and he is still her dad.*
- *When Parents divorce, the adults usually work things out to be sure that children still see both of them. All new things take getting used to. What’s most important is for everyone to have opportunities to create and maintain relationships that are healthy, caring and respectful of one another. Parents still love their children and want to include them in their lives as much as possible.*

For additional resources see: [www.colage.org](http://www.colage.org) or [www.straightspouse.org](http://www.straightspouse.org)

### 12. “Can two boys or two girls get married?”

Sample response:

- *No, children can’t get married! Grown-ups, on the other hand, create families in many ways. Many grown-ups live their lives in couples and take care of one another. Being married is one way to do this. In some places women can marry women and men can marry men. In some places, they cannot, because there is no law that says they can. Whether they are married or not, two people who love each other can live together, take care of one another and be a family, with or without children.*

### 13. “Are you gay?”

There are many reasons a student or an adult might ask this question and many different ways to respond. It might be curiosity – especially on the part of students – or it might be to get a rise out of a teacher. For children who have LGBTQ parents or family members it might be a way to open up a conversation with someone who they think understands their family.

Students often have questions about an educators’ family life, such as “are you married?” or “Do you have children?”

A good initial response to the question, “are you gay?” might be:

- *I’m curious why you are asking? Would you feel differently if I was?*

An educator who is gay can decide if this is a moment that seems right to be open about his or her sexual orientation. If an educator is out to the principal, it is advisable to talk to the principal ahead of time about this possibility. It is easier for colleagues to support openly LGBTQ educators if they have the information ahead of time.

LGBTQ educators who are not open about their sexual orientation or gender identity might say:

- *That’s not something I want to talk about. Since that has to do with my personal life, and we’re not here to learn about me, that is not something I want to talk about.*

Heterosexual educators also have different options to respond to this question. Instead of answering directly, they may also want to engage in dialogue by asking questions such as:

- *Would it make a difference to you if I was “gay?”*
- *Why do you ask? That’s not something I want to talk about.*

Some heterosexual educators do not come out as heterosexual to support their LGBTQ colleagues.

#### **14. “What does ‘fag’ mean?”**

Sample response:

- *The word “fag” is a term for “gay” that is used as a put-down. It is not OK to use that word because it hurts people’s feelings.*

#### **15. “What’s a ‘dyke’?”**

Sample response:

- *The word “dyke” is a term for “lesbian” that is often used as a put-down. Sometimes kids use this word to insult a girl who acts tough, is strong or who stands up for herself, especially if she is standing up to a boy. Sometimes kids use this word to insult two girls who like each other a lot, whether or not they are lesbians. It is not OK to use this word because it hurts people’s feelings.*

(Note: Some lesbians have reclaimed the word “dyke” to use it in a positive way to identify themselves.)

#### **16. “Didn’t that person used to be a man? Why does he look like a woman now?”**

Sample response:

- *Yes, she did used to be a man. Some people who were born as boys or men say they always felt like a girl or a woman on the inside. As an adult they decided to make their outside appearance look like a woman so that their body and their feelings inside match. They believe that they will be happier to have what they look like on the outside match what they feel on the inside.*

This could all be said in reverse if the question were about a woman who had transitioned to be a man.

#### **17. “But he’s a boy, why does he always dress like a girl?” Or “If she isn’t a boy, why does she look and act like one all the time?”**

Some children from a very young age start to say that they feel like they are in the wrong body. Even though a child biologically appears to be a boy, they will say they are a girl and they prefer to wear dresses or other clothes to appear more like a girl. They may also prefer activities that are traditionally considered activities for girls. At the same time, while biologically a girl, a child may start saying, “I’m a boy.”

Discuss with the child's parents/guardians how they respond to questions. It won't be the first time they have been asked. Also discuss this with the administration and other staff, as they will get questions too. Some basic things to discuss with parents/guardians include what name to use, what pronoun to use, professional language to use with administrators, educators and other parents/guardians and simple ways to answer other students' questions based on the individual situation.

If you know that a student entering your class presents as a different gender than the child's biological sex, check out some of the additional resources to help give you the background to work with the child and family.

### **18. You overhear a child say, "Gay people are bad."**

You could ask that child why he or she thinks that. You also could check to see if the child knows what "gay" means. Depending on the response, you may first have to define what "gay" or "lesbian" means. This could also be an opportunity to dispel stereotypes and the very notion of a category of people being all bad or all good.

It is also an opportunity to reaffirm that we respect all people, including LGBTQ people, in our classroom. Saying that a group of people are bad is hurtful not only to people who are gay and to students who may have relatives or friends who are gay, but also to anyone who cares about not hurting other people's feelings.

Sample response:

- *No group of people is all bad or all good, and most people are neither all good nor all bad. Most of us do some good things and some bad things. Gay people are like everyone else, but they are not good or bad because they are gay. One of the ways we try to be good is respecting all people and not hurting other people's feelings.*

## **Questions Parents / Guardians May Ask**

### **19. "Aren't the students too young to learn what 'gay' means?"**

Sample response:

- *In elementary school, learning the meaning of "gay" or "lesbian" can come up in a couple of contexts – families, name-calling and current events.*
- *For example, we may be talking about the mothers or fathers of one of our students or we may be looking at a book that shows a child with two moms or two dads. If we are defining the word for students, we are talking about adults who fall in love with other adults of the same sex.*
- *Students often use the word "gay" to mean that something is stupid, or they use it as a put-down for a boy whom they are not acting masculine enough. However, they often don't know what "gay" actually means. We are teaching the students to understand the words they are using or hearing. We are talking about not hurting classmates and others with our words.*

Students also see the words “lesbian”, “gay”, “bisexual” or “transgender” as headlines at the grocery store checkout counter. They overhear them in the news. Then they come into class and ask what they mean.

It's often helpful to use illustrations, as in the following responses:

- *Roberto is talking about his family when he talks about visiting his grandparents with his two moms and younger brother, just as Sasha is talking about her family when she describes her vacation with her mommy and daddy and sister.*
- *Showing a book that has two dads cooking dinner for their child shows two parents caring for their son.*
- *Seeing a film with children talking about the many kinds of families they have and grow up in helps students see the common threads that run through caring families: love and concern for children..*
- *Some kids came into class this morning and were talking about the People magazine cover “Lance Bass (formerly of ‘N Sync) IS Gay!” They were giggling. Finally a girl came over to me and asked, “What does that mean?” Two bows were sent to my office this morning for pushing each other around when one of them said, “get out of my way, faggot.” When I asked them if they knew what it meant, they paused and one finally said, “I know. Francisco told me. He said that it’s the king of all swears.”*

## **20. “I don’t want my child to think that being gay is an OK option for them.”**

Sample responses:

- *Being gay has to do with a feeling deep inside of you. People don’t choose to be gay or not. As people grow older they become aware of feeling attracted to others, whether those feeling are for someone of the same gender, a different gender or both.*
- *Knowing someone who is gay will not make you gay. People who are gay or lesbian know a lot of people who are not gay or lesbian but that hasn’t changed who they are.*

Information and discussion about gay and lesbian people will not make anyone gay or straight. Knowing or learning about gay people, however, might make someone less likely to insult or threaten someone he or she thinks is gay. Hopefully it will help our students not allow a friend to be bullied or ostracized for having a gay or lesbian parent.

## **21. “Thank you so much for talking about families with two moms and two dads. What made you decide to talk about this?”**

Sample responses:

- *Families are critical to students’ well-being. Families are children’s first point of reference. They need to know that their families matter. Families are often discussed as a part of this curriculum in kindergarten and first grade. Not talking about some thing sends a very powerful message to children. It can suggest that it is either not important enough to merit discussion or that it is to be kept secret, which suggests it is shameful. When children with two moms or two dads never hear their families mentioned or see their families reflected in the books or other materials used in their school, they may feel invisible, as if their families don’t count.*
- *There is so much information out there in the media. It is on TV, in the tabloids, in the supermarket checkout lines. It is information that children have access to, so I thought that it was important to provide a setting where students can ask questions*

*and get some factual information about LGBTQ people and families with two moms or two dads. We live in a diverse world. Students need to have the tools and information to better understand the world around them.*

- *When I talk about families with two moms or two dads, I am talking about one of the many kinds of families that support children. I am talking about parents who love and care for their children. It is important for students to learn about different family structures even if these kinds of families are not represented in our community. They are in the community at large. Children from other families who don't learn about families with two moms or two dads early in school may think that there is something wrong with that family structure. Silence may result in all children receiving a negative message.*

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## Sample Training Guide

Creating a Welcoming Environment for LGBT families Training: 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Onsite Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Times and Roles	Activity	Supplies
<p>2:00-2:05</p> <p>ID facilitator</p>	<p>Set Context for the Day Stat card on each chair.</p> <p>Introduction- Introduction of Our Family Coalition, intro of Training Facilitators and review the day's agenda.</p> <p>Agenda for today: Group Agreements Participant Go Around LGBTQ Definitions Human Bingo Value Clarifications Value All Families Video Review Tips Document Head Heart and Feet Closing, resources and evaluation</p> <p><b>Group agreements</b> Group agreements are important to encourage participation from everyone here today. These include- Respect-respect of one another, content, and new ideas Step Up, Step Back-Ask participants who speak easily to step back and allow room for others &amp; ask those who are less comfortable to speak in front of a group to step up Confidentiality-what is said in here generally stays in here Try it on-try new ideas, concepts and information from today's training Does anyone have anything to add? Can we agree all with these group agreements?</p>	<p>Watch Nametags Packets Chart of Agenda Chart of Agreements</p>
<p>2:05-2:15</p> <p>ID facilitator</p>	<p><b>Participant Introductions with Stat Cards</b></p> <p>We are now going to have the opportunity to get to know one another a little bit more. We would to go around the room and participants to introduce themselves, how they work with children and families and one thing you can't tell by looking at you.</p> <p>Thank participants for sharing. Did we learn anything new or any surprises about participants? When discussing our differences when it comes to identities and life experiences, it's important to remember</p>	<p>Stat Cards</p>

## Sample Training Guide

	<p>you can't always "tell a book from it's cover." When working with the LGBTQ community and their families, it's important to recognize you can't always "tell" who is LGBT parent and also might challenge our stereotype of what an LGBT person "looks like." Being inclusive of all families, including LGBT families, should be the standard we work towards and sustain. Discussing and implementing strategies that honor all families will strengthen our work and commitment to the children we serve.</p>	
<p>2:15-2:30</p> <p>ID facilitator</p>	<p><b>Definitions Exercise</b></p> <p>Definitions and labels are in a constant process of changing and growing—that's one of the things that is so exciting about this community! Our belief is that people have the right to define themselves and there are no hard and fast rules about what language will work in every situation. We encourage folks to keep up on definitions, and if you are curious about what a term means, ask. We are going to go over this glossary in a fun way, just so you have some more familiarity with these terms. That way when they come up it will be more comfortable. Mention the diversity within LGBT communities in terms of what language folks use and are comfortable with, for example the word "queer." Share your own perspectives, acknowledge the complexity. We also would like to add that labels/definitions can be limiting. All people's sexuality can be seen by a general spectrum.</p> <p>We will call out a definition and you can tell us what word we are defining from those on this page. Questions?</p> <p><b><u>Terms and definitions:</u></b></p> <p>Lesbian-refers to a woman who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to other women.</p> <p>Gay-refers to a person who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to members of the same sex. Often used to refer to a man who is attracted to another man.</p> <p>Bisexual-refers to a person who is attracted to members of both sexes.</p> <p>Transgender-a term to describe people whose gender identity does not correspond to their birth-assigned sex and/or the stereotypes associated with that sex.</p> <p>Queer- is an umbrella term used to describe LGBT people; it has been reclaimed by some LGBT people from its derogatory use by others and is used to express pride in being LGBT.</p> <p>Homophobia-the irrational fear of feeling attraction for people of your same gender. Also, hatred towards people who are—or appear to be LGBTQ.</p>	<p>Flip chart paper with terms</p>

## Sample Training Guide

	<p>Ally- A person who does not identify as LGBTQIQ but supports the rights of people who do identify as LGBTQIQ and speaks out against homophobia.</p> <p>Heterosexism -The assumption that everyone or a particular person is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is "normal." It can be distinguished from homophobia in that it doesn't necessarily imply hostility towards other sexual orientations, merely a failure to account for their existence.</p>	
<p>2:30-2:45</p> <p>ID facilitator</p>	<p><b>Human Bingo</b></p> <p>Overview: This exercise serves as a fun, interactive way to invite participants to meet each other, get to know one another a little bit and start learning about LGBT families and relevant resources.</p> <p>Things to Remember: During the conversation as you go over the Tips, try to make connections with diverse groups. For example, when we talk about legal rights, people with economic resources can pay for the legal right to second parent adopt their children, whereas many times people without those economic resources cannot. This makes a child's relationship with a second parent much more tentative.</p> <p>**The directions for Human Bingo are on the top of the Human Bingo sheet. Depending on your assessment of the group (size, experience, etc.), you may need to change the directions. Just let people know that you are adapting based on the group—and they can use each person's name twice or fill two rows instead of the whole sheet, depending on how long you want to take with the exercise.</p> <p><b>Steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain the activity to the participants. See description at top of the Human Bingo Worksheet. It is helpful to read it aloud and to repeat your directions of how many boxes/rows they need to fill. It's also fun to participate—your energy will get them going!</li> <li>2. Walk around the room, fill the spots, meet everyone.</li> <li>3. When someone yells BINGO! give them a prize (like a children's book)and bring the group back together and when the group is ready (people are often having exciting conversations at this time), debrief together. If it starts to go too long or doesn't go long enough, use your judgment and adjust the exercise!</li> </ol> <p><b>Debrief the Activity:</b> Ask and discuss the following questions with the group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Which boxes were easy to fill?</li> </ol>	<p>Free Book to Winner</p>

## Sample Training Guide

	<p>b. Which were harder? *You can take these pieces in order of the Tips document or they can go in any order, based on what comes up from the audience.</p> <p><b>Start here:</b> Setting the Context: How about: “Has heard someone insulted with a homophobic term”? Or “Can name a stereotype about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, two spirit, straight people”? Usually pretty easy, immediate. Anti-gay slurs are commonly accepted in public in general and children experience them daily in our schools. Revisit the frame that we are culturally and socially detoxing from many hurtful messages.</p> <p>What about “One way homophobia hurts people who are straight”? Name bullying statistics and connect to gender. According to Women’s Educational Media Project, Studies show that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students are at disproportionate risk for bullying and harassment. They hear anti-gay slurs such as “homo,” “faggot” and “sissy” about 26 times a day, or once every 14 minutes. More than 30 percent of LGBT youth were threatened or injured at school in the last year alone. For every gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender student who reported being harassed, four straight students said they were harassed for being perceived as gay or lesbian. People are bullied and targeted for being perceived to be gay b/c their gender expression doesn’t match up with traditional expectations—many of those folks are straight. Straight parents’ worry and grief when their children come out. Also mention lack of holistic relationships with friends and loved ones because of homophobia.</p>	
<p>2:45-3:05</p> <p><i>ID facilitator</i></p>	<p><b>Values Clarification</b></p> <p>Values Clarification Remind participants about sensitivity when discussing LGBT people.</p> <p>Now we are going to do a value clarification. Has anyone participated in a values clarification? This gives us an opportunity to talk briefly about our values and beliefs. Please do not place your name on the handout. On the handout, there are three statements. Review each statement and circle your first response. Don’t think about your answer too long, go with your initial response. Once you are finished, please turn your paper over and I will go around to collect them.</p> <p>Once handouts are completed and you have recollected them, shuffle them together and pass them out again. Explain to the group that they now have a handout of a peer. We are now going to represent the paper we have.</p> <p>The answers reflected on the might not match with ours. You are asking the participants to “try on” the answers of their peer. Ask participants to take turns volunteering to read of each statement to the larger group. When the statement is read each person will walks towards</p>	<p>Half Sheets with questions</p> <p>Agree Strongly Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree signs</p> <p>Tape</p>

## Sample Training Guide

	<p>the place in the room that reflects the answer on their sheet (Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree and Disagree). We will then ask the participants to answer why they answered they way they did. Remind participants about our group agreements and the fact that their peers answered these statements. Also remind them to align their responses with their handout. The statements are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am comfortable using words like gay and lesbian with the children and families I work with. Children should be raised by a man and a woman.</li> </ul> <p>Debrief- Thanks participants for participating. Also highlight the rewarding and sometimes challenging conversations value clarification brings up. This was a brief opportunity to learn a little bit more about one another, clarify where others are at and where they want to grow. Also comment on the respect and comfort had with one another.</p>	
<p>3:05-3:15 <i>ID facilitator</i></p>	<p><b>Value All Families Video OFC DVD</b></p> <p>We are going to watch a movie which is going to give us an opportunity to hear from bay area LGBT parents and what their experience have been with institutions. After the movie, we are going to break up into pairs and respond to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What barriers did families face in the film?</li> <li>• What barriers do you think families may face at Portola Family Connections? How do you think you can address those barriers?</li> </ul> <p>Things to keep in mind: <i>View film</i> Now let's break up into pairs and respond to the questions we discussed before the film. Each person in each pair should have the opportunity to address both questions. Address the question that was proposed prior to viewing the film. Popcorn style feed back from participants, trainers scribe responses on flip chart paper.</p>	<p>PC Projector DVD Flip Chart Markers</p> <p>(Action Steps) Flip Chart responses to what they can do at this organization to address barriers</p>
<p>3:15-3:50 <i>ID facilitator</i></p>	<p><b>Tips Sheet Small groups</b></p> <p>Each participant will work in a small group and review their designated tip (s).</p> <p>Each group will review the following questions in their small groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How would you incorporate this tip at your site?</li> <li>2. What would be the reward?</li> </ol>	<p>Tip Sheets</p>

## Sample Training Guide

	<p>3. What would be the challenges? 4. How would you address these challenges?</p> <p>After each group has 10 minutes to discuss, we will review in a larger group and chart out the strategies of incorporating the tips document.</p>	
<p>3:50-4:00</p> <p><i>ID facilitator</i></p>	<p><b>Head Heart and Feet</b></p> <p>Something you've learned, something you've felt and something you are going to walk away with and do differently. (Draw a stick figure on flip chart paper) Ask participants to call out responses to any of these areas.</p>	<p>Flip Chart paper Markers Tape</p>
<p>3:55-4:00</p>	<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p>Evaluations</p>

**Supplies**

- o Nametags
- o Packets
- o Flip chart paper with terms
- o Definitions Flip Charts
- o Tape
- o Values Clarifications materials
- o Markers
- o Video
- o Evaluations
- o 5 books to give away

## What Mother? What Father? by Eleanor Grater Lewis

*Editor's Note: An important and easy way to teach one aspect of family diversity is to stop the stereotypes and start with each child's actual, individual family. How, for example, does fatherless Chloe feel when every day, two, three, four times a day, her nursery school teacher talks about "your mommy and your daddy"? Why would one do such a cruel thing to a child? Can't we talk about "your family"? Sensitivity is at the heart of an early childhood educator's tapestry of skills.*

The time has come to think critically about two holidays that seem as American as apple pie and as rooted in the roster of holiday celebrations as the Fourth of July. Most teachers have become sensitive to the fact that classroom celebrations of Christmas, Chanukah, and Halloween and other holidays may offend or exclude some children, yet some still argue that Mother's Day and Father's Day are "good" to celebrate because they express family values. But whose family?

The NSP (No Such Place) Day Care Center has planned a Mother's Day Breakfast. The children are busy making collage placemats for the big event. The activity is developmentally appropriate, with children choosing items from many bright and interesting materials and the teacher making sure that all the things they need are within reach. Susie is talking excitedly about her mother coming to school, when the teacher notices Timmy sitting quietly with tears rolling down his face. With concern, she goes to Timmy and asks why he is crying. He sobs that he doesn't have a mother. The teacher already knew this but assumed he would bring the aunt he lives with to the celebration. She wipes his face and kindly says, "Timmy that's OK. Don't worry about it you live with Aunt Bessie. You can bring her to the breakfast." She hugs him, wipes his eyes and walks away. Tommy mutters, "But she's not my mother."

No, Aunt Bessie is not Timmy's mother and, at a Mother's Day breakfast, she can be only second best. Many of our children no longer live in "traditional" families each consisting of a male and female parent and one or more children. Now children have families with one parent; with one parent and an unrelated spouse; with one parent, an unrelated spouse, and unrelated siblings, with two mothers; with two fathers; with grandparents; with guardians; with foster parents; with grown siblings; with aunts and/or uncles and other relatives; and even with friends. Or they live in various part-time configurations, first with one family and then with another, each of which may be any variation of the modes just described.

Children must accept whatever family style they are part of. A child who lives with his grandmother must see that he is as much a member of a family as a child who lives with her mother, father, five brothers and sisters, uncle, two dogs, and a cat. Teachers who plan celebrations around the "traditional" family mode relegate any other format to second best.

The concept of Mother's Day and Father's Day has degenerated into a source of revenue for card, flower and candy companies. This is the most obvious when one notes that there is not only a Mother's Day but also a Mother-In-Law's Day and a Grandmother's Day. Can you think of any mother-in-law or grandmothers who are not mothers? But the

and a Grandmother's Day. Can you think of any mother-in-law or grandmothers who are not mothers? But the companies sell three separate cards, three bouquets, and three boxes of candy for the same person.

I would like to propose a new day to celebrate: "Someone I Love Day". A breakfast planned for this day allows Susie to bring her mother and Timmy to bring Aunt Bessie. Neither guest is second best: both are number one. You can plan more than one "Someone I Love Day" during the year, perhaps one in the spring and another in the fall. If you want children to bring more than one person, you could change the name to "People I Love Day".

Gifts that are of-or truly by-the child, such as photographs, handprints, hand casts, painted rocks, designs, collages, paintings or other pictures and clay designs, are worth more than any cut-out, "cute", teacher-directed activity or laboriously coupled message. They are keepsakes that will be treasured for many years.

When some teachers first hear about the concept of eliminating the traditional Mother's and Father's Day holidays from the year's activities, they often feel a loss of excitement. However, by developing new holidays that are appropriate for all the children in their classes, they can create new excitement a sense of celebration that doesn't leave anyone out, "Someone I Love Day" is an idea worth considering.

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# AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

Ellen C. Perrin, MD, and the Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health

## Technical Report: Coparent or Second-Parent Adoption by Same-Sex Parents

**ABSTRACT.** A growing body of scientific literature demonstrates that children who grow up with 1 or 2 gay and/or lesbian parents fare as well in emotional, cognitive, social, and sexual functioning as do children whose parents are heterosexual. Children's optimal development seems to be influenced more by the nature of the relationships and interactions within the family unit than by the particular structural form it takes.

### CURRENT SITUATION

Accurate statistics regarding the number of parents who are gay or lesbian are impossible to obtain. The secrecy resulting from the stigma still associated with homosexuality has hampered even basic epidemiologic research. A broad estimate is that between 1 and 9 million children in the United States have at least 1 parent who is lesbian or gay.<sup>1</sup>

Most individuals who have a lesbian and/or gay parent were conceived in the context of a heterosexual relationship. When a parent (or both parents) in a heterosexual couple "comes out" as lesbian or gay, some parents divorce and others continue to live as a couple. If they do decide to live separately, either parent may be the residential parent or children may live part-time in each home. Gay or lesbian parents may remain single or they may have same-sex partners who may or may not develop stepparenting relationships with the children. These families closely resemble stepfamilies formed after heterosexual couples divorce, and many of their parenting concerns and adjustments are similar. An additional concern for these parents is that pervasively heterosexist legal precedents have resulted in denial of custody and restriction of visitation rights to many gay and lesbian parents.

Increasing social acceptance of diversity in sexual orientation has allowed more gay men and lesbians to come out before forming intimate relationships or becoming parents. Lesbian and gay adults choose to become parents for many of the same reasons heterosexual adults do. The desire for children is a basic human instinct and satisfies many people's wish to leave a mark on history or perpetuate their family's story. In addition, children may satisfy people's desire to provide and accept love and nurturing from

others and may provide some assurance of care and support during their older years.

Many of the same concerns that exist for heterosexual couples when they consider having children also face lesbians and gay men. All parents have concerns about time, finances, and the responsibilities of parenthood. They worry about how children will affect their relationship as a couple, their own and their children's health, and their ability to manage their new parenting role in addition to their other adult roles. Lesbians and gay men undertaking parenthood face additional challenges, including deciding whether to conceive or adopt a child, obtaining donor sperm or arranging for a surrogate mother (if conceiving), finding an accepting adoption agency (if adopting), making legally binding arrangements regarding parental relationships, creating a substantive role for the nonbiologic or nonadoptive parent, and confronting emotional pain and restrictions imposed by heterosexism and discriminatory regulations.

Despite these challenges, lesbians and gay men increasingly are becoming parents on their own or in the context of an established same-sex relationship. Most lesbians who conceive a child do so using alternative insemination techniques with a donor's sperm. The woman or women may choose to become pregnant using sperm from a completely anonymous donor, from a donor who has agreed to be identifiable when the child becomes an adult, or from a fully known donor (eg, a friend or a relative of the nonconceiving partner). Lesbians also can become parents by fostering or adopting children, as can gay men. These opportunities are increasingly available in most states and in many other countries, although they are still limited by legal statutes in some places.

A growing number of gay men have chosen to become fathers through the assistance of a surrogate mother who bears their child. Others have made agreements to be coparents with a single woman (lesbian or heterosexual) or a lesbian couple.<sup>2-4</sup> Still other men make arrangements to participate as sperm donors in the conception of a child (commonly with a lesbian couple), agreeing to have variable levels of involvement with the child but without taking on the responsibilities of parenting.

When a lesbian or a gay man becomes a parent through alternative insemination, surrogacy, or adoption, the biologic or adoptive parent is recognized within the legal system as having full and more or less absolute parental rights. Although the biologic or adoptive parent's partner may function as

The recommendations in this statement do not indicate an exclusive course of treatment or serve as a standard of medical care. Variations, taking into account individual circumstances, may be appropriate.

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a coparent, he or she has no formal legal rights with respect to the child. Most state laws do not allow for adoption or guardianship by an unmarried partner unless the parental rights of the first parent are terminated. An attorney can prepare medical consent forms and nomination-of-guardian forms for the care of the child in the event of the legal parent's death or incapacity. These documents, however, do not have the force of an adoption or legal guardianship, and there is no guarantee that a court will uphold them. Some states recently have passed legislation that allows coparents to adopt their partner's children. Other states have allowed their judicial systems to determine eligibility for formal adoption by the coparent on a case-by-case basis. Coparent (or second-parent) adoption has important psychological and legal benefits.

Historically, gay men and lesbians have been prevented from becoming foster parents or adopting children and have been denied custody and rights of visitation of their children in the event of divorce on the grounds that they would not be effective parents. Legal justifications and social beliefs have presumed that their children would experience stigmatization, poor peer relationships, subsequent behavioral and emotional problems, and abnormal psychosexual development. During the past 20 years, many investigators have tried to determine whether there is any empirical support for these assumptions.

#### RESEARCH EVIDENCE

The focus of research has been on 4 main topic areas. Investigators have concentrated on describing the attitudes and behaviors of gay and lesbian parents and the psychosexual development, social experience, and emotional status of their children.

##### Parenting Attitudes and Behavior, Personality, and Adjustment of Parents

Stereotypes and laws that maintain discriminatory practices are based on the assumption that lesbian mothers and gay fathers are different from heterosexual parents in ways that are important to their children's well-being. Empirical evidence reveals in contrast that gay fathers have substantial evidence of nurturance and investment in their paternal role and no differences from heterosexual fathers in providing appropriate recreation, encouraging autonomy,<sup>5</sup> or dealing with general problems of parenting.<sup>6</sup> Compared with heterosexual fathers, gay fathers have been described to adhere to stricter disciplinary guidelines, to place greater emphasis on guidance and the development of cognitive skills, and to be more involved in their children's activities.<sup>7</sup> Overall, there are more similarities than differences in the parenting styles and attitudes of gay and nongay fathers.

Similarly, few differences have been found in the research from the last 2 decades comparing lesbian and heterosexual mothers' self-esteem, psychological adjustment, and attitudes toward child rearing.<sup>8,9</sup> Lesbian mothers fall within the range of normal psychological functioning on interviews and psychological assessments and report scores on standardized mea-

asures of self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and parenting stress indistinguishable from those reported by heterosexual mothers.<sup>10</sup>

Lesbian mothers strongly endorse child-centered attitudes and commitment to their maternal roles<sup>11-13</sup> and have been shown to be more concerned with providing male role models for their children than are divorced heterosexual mothers.<sup>6,14</sup> Lesbian and heterosexual mothers describe themselves similarly in marital and maternal interests, current lifestyles, and child-rearing practices.<sup>14</sup> They report similar role conflicts, social support networks, and coping strategies.<sup>15,16</sup>

##### Children's Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

The gender identity of preadolescent children raised by lesbian mothers has been found consistently to be in line with their biologic sex. None of the more than 300 children studied to date have shown evidence of gender identity confusion, wished to be the other sex, or consistently engaged in cross-gender behavior. No differences have been found in the toy, game, activity, dress, or friendship preferences of boys or girls who had lesbian mothers, compared with those who had heterosexual mothers.

No differences have been found in the gender identity, social roles, or sexual orientation of adults who had a divorced homosexual parent (or parents), compared with those who had divorced heterosexual parents.<sup>17-19</sup> Similar proportions of young adults who had homosexual parents and those who had heterosexual parents have reported feelings of attraction toward someone of the same sex.<sup>20</sup> Compared with young adults who had heterosexual mothers, men and women who had lesbian mothers were slightly more likely to consider the possibility of having a same-sex partner, and more of them had been involved in at least a brief relationship with someone of the same sex,<sup>10</sup> but in each group similar proportions of adult men and women identified themselves as homosexual.

##### Children's Emotional and Social Development

Because most children whose parents are gay or lesbian have experienced the divorce of their biologic parents, their subsequent psychological development has to be understood in that context. Whether they are subsequently raised by 1 or 2 separated parents and whether a stepparent has joined either of the biologic parents are important factors for children but are rarely addressed in research assessing outcomes for children who have a lesbian or gay parent.

The considerable research literature that has accumulated addressing this issue has generally revealed that children of divorced lesbian mothers grow up in ways that are very similar to children of divorced heterosexual mothers. Several studies comparing children who have a lesbian mother with children who have a heterosexual mother have failed to document any differences between such groups on personality measures, measures of peer group relationships, self-esteem, behavioral difficulties, academic success, or warmth and quality of family relationships.<sup>9,11,15,16,20,21</sup> Children's self-esteem has been

shown to be higher among adolescents whose mothers (of any sexual orientation) were in a new partnered relationship after divorce, compared with those whose mothers remained single, and among those who found out at a younger age that their parent was homosexual, compared with those who found out when they were older.<sup>22</sup>

Prevalent heterosexism and stigmatization might lead to teasing and embarrassment for children about their parent's sexual orientation or their family constellation and restrict their ability to form and maintain friendships. Adult children of divorced lesbian mothers have recalled more teasing by peers during childhood than have adult children of divorced heterosexual parents.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, children seem to cope rather well with the challenge of understanding and describing their families to peers and teachers.

Children born to and raised by lesbian couples also seem to develop normally in every way. Ratings by their mothers and teachers have demonstrated children's social competence and the prevalence of behavioral difficulties to be comparable with population norms.<sup>8,24</sup> In fact, growing up with parents who are lesbian or gay may confer some advantages to children. They have been described as more tolerant of diversity and more nurturing toward younger children than children whose parents are heterosexual.<sup>25,26</sup>

In 1 study, children of heterosexual parents saw themselves as being somewhat more aggressive than did children of lesbians, and they were seen by parents and teachers as more bossy, negative, and domineering. Children of lesbian parents saw themselves as more lovable and were seen by parents and teachers as more affectionate, responsive, and protective of younger children, compared with children of heterosexual parents.<sup>25,27</sup> In a more recent investigation, children of lesbian parents reported their self-esteem to be similar to that of children of heterosexual parents and saw themselves as similar in aggressiveness and sociability.<sup>15</sup>

Recent investigations have attempted to discern factors that promote optimal well-being of children who have lesbian parents. The adjustment of children who have 2 mothers seems to be related to their parents' satisfaction with their relationship and specifically with the division of responsibility they have worked out with regard to child care and household chores.<sup>28</sup> Children with lesbian parents who reported greater relationship satisfaction, more egalitarian division of household and paid labor,<sup>29</sup> and more regular contact with grandparents and other relatives<sup>30</sup> were rated by parents and teachers to be better adjusted and to have fewer behavioral problems.

Children in all family constellations have been described by parents and teachers to have more behavioral problems when parents report more personal distress and more dysfunctional parent-child interactions. In contrast, children are rated as better adjusted when their parents report greater relationship satisfaction, higher levels of love, and lower interparental conflict regardless of their parents' sexual orientation. Children apparently are more pow-

erfully influenced by family processes and relationships than by family structure.

## SUMMARY

The small and nonrepresentative samples studied and the relatively young age of most of the children suggest some reserve. However, the weight of evidence gathered during several decades using diverse samples and methodologies is persuasive in demonstrating that there is no systematic difference between gay and nongay parents in emotional health, parenting skills, and attitudes toward parenting. No data have pointed to any risk to children as a result of growing up in a family with 1 or more gay parents. Some among the vast variety of family forms, histories, and relationships may prove more conducive to healthy psychosexual and emotional development than others.

Research exploring the diversity of parental relationships among gay and lesbian parents is just beginning. Children whose parents divorce (regardless of sexual orientation) are better adjusted when their parents have high self-esteem, maintain a responsible and amicable relationship, and are currently living with a partner.<sup>22,31</sup> Children living with divorced lesbian mothers have better outcomes when they learn about their mother's homosexuality at a younger age, when their fathers and other important adults accept their mother's lesbian identity, and perhaps when they have contact with other children of lesbians and gay men.<sup>22,24</sup> Parents and children have better outcomes when the daunting tasks of parenting are shared, and children seem to benefit from arrangements in which lesbian parents divide child care and other household tasks in an egalitarian manner<sup>28</sup> as well as when conflict between partners is low. Although gay and lesbian parents may not, despite their best efforts, be able to protect their children fully from the effects of stigmatization and discrimination, parents' sexual orientation is not a variable that, in itself, predicts their ability to provide a home environment that supports children's development.

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## Booklist

**ABC A Family Alphabet Book** B. Combs, Two Lives Publishing (2001). \$8.95, pp32 (baby-preschool). It's family fun from A to Z in this alphabet book that shows kids and their parents laughing, playing and enjoying family life. All of the brilliant watercolors depict families headed by gays and lesbians.

**A Boy's Best Friend** Joan Alden, Boston, MA: Alyson Publication (1992). \$12.95, pp34 (grades 2-5). A very unusual dog, LeDogg, shows young Will that being different can be wonderful. Will has asthma and has a run-in with bullies. Will's mother and partner are very supportive and understanding.

**All Families are Different** Sol Gordon, New York, NY: Prometheus Books (2000). \$10.00, pp50 (grades K-5). Gordon explores a variety of family structures and issues including adoption, multiracial families, foster homes, and same-sex headed households. Illustrations (black and white) show a variety of family situations to stimulate awareness and acceptance. More text than a "typical" children's book. One mention of a lesbian family, strong focus on children's possible feelings about divorce, foster care and adoption.

**All Families are Special** Norma Simon, illustrated by Teresa Flavin, Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company (2003). \$16.95, pp32 (grades K-3). When a teacher asks her students to tell about their families, each child speaks of a different configuration.

**Amy Asks a Question** Jeanne Arnold, Racine, WI: Mother Courage Press (1997). \$13.00, pp47 (grades 3-6). Amy asks, "Grandma, what's a lesbian?" A beautiful conversation between Amy and her lesbian grandmother ensues.

**And Tango Makes Three** Justin Richardson, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing (2005). \$15.00, pp32, (grades K-3). This children's book, based on the true story of Roy and Silo, is about two male penguins from a New York zoo who become first a couple and then hatch an egg to become a family.

**Anna Day and the O-ring** Elaine Wickens, Boston, MA: Alyson Wonderland (1994). \$6.95, pp24. A picture book about a young boy's birthday present, a tent that will not stay up unless they find the O-ring. The young boy just happens to have two mommies.

**Antonio's Card / La Tarjeta de Antonio** Rigoberto Gonzalez and Cecilia Concepcion. Children's Book Press (2005). \$16.95, pp32 (grade k-3). This bilingual story resonates with all children who have been faced with speaking up for themselves or for the people they love.

**Are You a Girl or a Boy?** Karleen Pendleton Jiménez, Green Dragon Press (2000). \$12.79, (grades preK-2). A sweet book about a gender-different kid. This is a story of a child thinking through who she is and learning through her mother's love how to be both strong and soft.

**Asha's Mums** Rosamund Elwin and Michele Paulse, Women's Press, Toronto, Ontario (1990). \$5.95, pp24 (grades K-5). Asha, her teacher, and her two moms help other students understand their loving family. The main characters are African-American.

**Belinda's Bouquet** Lesléa Newman, Boston, MA: Alyson Publications (1991). (grades K-3). *Out of Print*. Belinda hears a cruel comment about her weight. The lesbian mom of her friend, Daniel, helps her to appreciate herself for who she is.

**Captain and Matey Set Sail (I Can Read Book 2)** Daniel Lawrence, illustrated by Claudio Munoz, New York, NY: HarperTrophy (2002). \$4.99, pp64 (grades K-3). This appealing easy-reader offers a high-seas adventure and themes of friendship and individuality. Though they have many differences, friendship wins out in this charming tale.

**Case of the Stolen Scarab (Candlestone Inn Mystery #1)** Nancy Garden, Ridley Park, PA: Two Lives Publishing (2004). \$8.95, pp205 (grades 2-5). Two kids move to Virginia with two moms find themselves trying to solve a mystery

that steadily grows more complicated - and perhaps dangerous as well.

**Daddy's Roommate** Michael Willhoite, Boston, MA: Alyson Wonderland (1990). \$10.95, pp29 (grades 1-5). Nick's father has a male roommate that moves in and the three of them become a family doing every day family activities. Nick's mom explains to Nick that gay is "just one more kind of love. And love is the best kind of happiness."

**Daddy's Wedding** Michael Willhoite, Ridley Park, PA: Alyson Wonderland (1990) \$10.95, pp29 (grades 1-5). Nick, a 10 year old, gets to be the best man at his father's wedding when he has a commitment ceremony with his partner Frank. The supportive ex-wife, grandparents and many friends attend – even Clancey the dog who almost knocks over the cake.

**Day They Put a Tax on Rainbows and Other Stories, The** J. Valentine, Boston, MA: Alyson Publications (1992). \$12.95 (grades 3-6). 3 short, engaging fantasy stories, some with color illustrations with minor mention of parents who just happen to be gay. An equally unique and enjoyable companion to "The Duke Who Outlawed Jellybeans." Three original fairy tales about a boy who loved to feed the birds, a girl with a magic ring who discovered a kingdom beneath the sea, and a king who complained that his throne was too lumpy.

**Different Dragon, The** Jennifer Bryan, Ridley Park, PA: Two Lives Publishing (2007). \$8.75, pp32 (grades K-2). This bedtime story about bedtime stories shows how the wonderful care and curiosity of a little boy, with some help from his willing moms, can lead to magical and unexpected places. Join Noah and his cat, Diva, on this nighttime adventure and you too will leave with an unforgettable new dragon friend!

**Duke Who Outlawed Jelly Beans and Other Stories, The** Johnny Valentine, Ridley Park, PA: Alyson Wonderland (1991). \$12.95, pp32 (grades 1-5). A member of a delightful collection that Alyson Wonderland publishes that incorporates lesbian and gay parents without focusing on l/g issues. The stories are about a frog that becomes a prince – and then a frog again, seven-league boots that walk on clouds, a girl who won't let her dreams be shattered simply because she isn't a boy, a dragon with more greed than brains, and a duke who doesn't stop at just outlawing jelly beans. *Any book in this series is an excellent choice for a elementary school library.*

**Entertainer, The** Michael Willhoite, Ridley Park, PA: Alyson Wonderland (1992). \$3.95, pp32 (grades 1-5). A story in pictures shows a child interested in magic. Very subtle showing of lesbian parents.

**Families** Susan Kuklin, New York, NY: Hyperion Books for Children (2006). \$15.99, pp40 (grade K-4). This book consists of interviews with the children from 15 different families, including mixed-race, immigrant, gay, lesbian, and divorced, as well as single parents and families for whom religion is a focal point.

**Families: A Celebration of Diversity, Commitment and Love** Aylette Jenness, New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin (1990). \$4.95, pp48 (grades 2-6). Interracial, single- parent, communal, extended and foster families are included along with 2 households with gay/lesbian members. A bit outdated look with black and white pictures. Told from the children's perspective with a brief mention of heavier issues (death of parent, thoughts of suicide.)

**Families: A Coloring Book** Michael Willhoite, Boston, MA: Alyson Publishing (1991). \$2.95, pp32 (grade K-3). A coloring book about families including gay/lesbian families.

**Families: All Kinds of Families** Norma Simon, Chicago, IL: Albert Whitman & Company (1976). \$12.95. pp40 (grades K-2). Explores in words and pictures what a family is and how families vary in make-up and lifestyles.

**Family Book, The** Todd Parr, New York, NY: Little Brown (2003). \$15.95, pp29 (grades K-2). This colorfully illustrated book for primary grades talks about different kinds of family structures – similarities and difference.

**Felicia's Favorite Story** Leslea Newman, Ridley Park, PA: Two Lives Publishing (2002). \$9.95, pp24 (grade K-2). Felicia's favorite bedtime story is about how she was adopted by her two mothers from Guatemala.

**Generous Jefferson Bartleby Jones, The** Forman Brown, Boston, MA: Alyson Pub. (1991). \$9.00, pp38 (grades K-3). A boy with two dads finds that one of them is always free to have fun with until he loans them out, to generously. Black-and-white illustration and in poem format

**Heather Has Two Mommies** Leslea Newman, Boston, MA: Alyson Publications (2000). \$12.95, pp25 (grades K-3). Now updated and even better. Heather, a 2 year old, starts preschool and discovers a variety of family structures when the children draw pictures of whom they live with.

**How Would You Feel If Your Dad Was Gay?** Ann Heron and Meredith Maran, Boston, MA: Alyson Pub (1994). \$6.95, pp48 (grade 2-5). Jasmine and her brother disagree about telling others of their gay father. Provides role models for children in these nontraditional families and to give insight into the unique problems they face. The main characters are African-American. Lots of text, some perjorative remarks.

**Is Your Family Like Mine?** Lois Abramchik, Open Heart Open Mind Books (1996). \$13.95, pp32 (grades K-2). The author explores the life of a lesbian family through the eyes of a kindergartener. When asked about her Daddy she finds many different types of families and ends up with "...a Daddy that creates and two moms that love her."

**It's Okay To Be Different** Todd Parr. New York, NY: Little Brown (1991). \$16.00 (hc), pp32 (grades pre-K-2). This is a cool book for primary grades, with bright, fun illustrations and wonderful messages about all kinds of diversity.

**Jennifer has Two Daddies** Patricia Galloway and Ana Ariml, UK: Women's Press (1983). \$6.95, pp32 (grades 1-5).

**Jenny Lives With Eric and Martin** Susanne Bosche, Boston, MA: Alyson Pub (1983). \$5.50, pp52 (grades K-6). A photostory about the day-to-day life of a young Danish girl living with her two dads. A candid and realistic portrayal of a gay family. Handles a brief scene with a homophobic neighbor very well.

**King & King** By Linda de Hann and Stern Nijland, Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press (2000). \$14.95, pp32 (grades K-2). When the Queen decides that the prince should marry, they search for a suitable princess. Finally the last princess come and the prince falls in love, with her brother. The Queen is thrilled, have a wedding and everyone lives "happily ever after".

**Living in Secret** Cristina Salat, New York, NY: Bantam (1993). \$8.00, pp190 (grades 3-6). Amelia's mother helps her run away from her father who has custody and establish a new home and identity in San Francisco with her mother's girlfriend. Novel.

**Lucy Goes to the Country** Joseph Kennedy and John Canemaker, Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Wonderland (1998). \$15.95, pp32 (grades K-2) Lucy the cat provides a "cat's eye view" of life with her two dads and their adventures. The story offers lessons about different kinds of families and meeting new friends.

**Molly's Family** Nancy Garden, New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux (2004). \$12.00, pp32 (grades K-2). Kindergartener draws a picture of her lesbian family and grapples with being the only child with same-gender parents. Molly's dilemma, sensitively explored in words and art, shows readers that even if a family is different from others, it can still be happy, loving, and "real."

**My Two Uncles** Juidth Vigna, Morton Grove, IL: A. Whitman (1995). \$14.95 (grades K-3). Elly and her two uncles, Uncle Ned and his friend Phil, must work through their feelings when Elly's grandfather refuses to invite Phil to a family celebration. Concept Books.

**Of Many Colors: Portraits of Multiracial Families** Gigi Kaeser and Peggy Gillespie, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press (1997). \$17.95, pp143 (grades 2-12). Photos and interviews with twenty diverse American families formed through interracial relationships or transracial adoption, including families with gay and lesbian parents. Also av. ailable as a traveling photo exhibit for grades K-12. <http://www.familydiv.org/index.php>

**One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dads, Blue Dads** Johnny Valentine, Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Wonderland (1994). \$8.50, pp32 (ps-grade 3). Lou and a friend compare notes on their families in this breezy book about parents who seems different. An easy to read book about parents who are different but not really.

**Saturday is Pattyday** Leslea Newman and Annette Hegel, Norwich, VT: New Victoria (1993). \$6.95, pp21 (preschool-grade 3). An important story of a boy's two moms breaking up and their family process.

**Two Moms, The Zark, and Me** Johnny Valentine, Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Wonderland (1993). \$12.95, pp48 (grades

K-3). A whimsical story about a young child with two moms, a playful animal, and the narrow-minded McFinks. The child gets lost at the zoo and the McFinks try to find a “normal” family instead of the her/his own.

**Uncle What-Is-It is Coming to Visit** Michael Willhoite, Boston, MA: Alyson Publication (1993). \$8.45, pp16 (grades K-6). Two young kids misunderstand about their uncle being gay. An excellent explanation that gay men are just guys who fall in love with each other instead of with women. Some stereotyping of gay men and pejorative remarks.

**What Happened to Mr. Forster?** Gary Bargar, New York, NY: Clarion Books (1981). pp169 (grades 4-7). A gay teacher helps a 6th grade student gain self- esteem.

**Who's In a Family?** Robert Skutch, Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press (1994). \$7.95, pp32 (grades K-2). Picture book with many different examples of families.

**Women Are Plumbers** Part of the series "When I Grow Up I Can...". Red Bank, NJ: Lavender Crystal Press, P.O. Box 8932, Red Bank, NJ 07701. \$6.50, pp24 (grade 3). A story that show two lesbian partners in a plumbing business. It shows the work they do together and going home at night, together.

**Your Family, My Family** Joan Drescher, New York, NY: Walker & Co. (1981). \$7.95, pp32 (grades 1-5). A picture book about families including gay families.

**Zack's Story: Photographs Growing up With Same-Sex Parents** Keith Elliot Greenbury, Learner Publishing Group (1996). (grades 1-6). Zack is raised by his mom and female partner going through every day activities. Lots of great pictures. Mentions a homophobic name calling incident at school which has a positive outcome. Also a reference to artificial insemination because he has a new baby sister by the end of the book.

## Older Students

**Am I Blue? Coming Out From the Silence** Marion Dane Bauer (Ed.), New York, NY: HarperCollins (1994). \$7.99, pp273. Stories about growing up gay or growing up with LGBT friends or family members. Nonfiction. Ages 14 and up. M. Bauer. HarperCollins, New York.

**Another Kind of Monday** William E. Jr. Coles, New York, NY: Antheum Books for Young Readers (1996). pp256. When Mark discovers money and a note concealed in the pages of a copy of Dickens' Great expectations, he undertakes a quest with his classmate Zeena that leads to more money, more clues to follow, and ultimately more knowledge of himself.

**Coping With...Your Sexual Orientation** Deborah A. Miller and Alex Waigandt, New York, NY: Rosen Publishing Group (1990). \$13.95, pp104 (school library). An excellent library book in the 22 book series "Coping With ..." Especially designed for the public school system. (NIP).

**Deliver Us From Evie** M.E. Kerr, New York, NY: HarperTrophy, (1995). \$6.99, pp198. 16 year-old Parr Burrman faces difficult times when word spreads through his rural Missouri town that his older sister is a lesbian, and she leaves the family farm to live with the daughter of the town's banker. Novel. Ages 13 and up. M.E. Kerr. HarperCollins, New York.

**Facts about ... Lesbian and Gay Rights** Mark McCauslin, New York, NY: Crestwood House (1992). \$12.95, pp48 (grades 5-6).

**Free Your Mind: the book for gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth--and their allies** Ellen Bass and Kate Kaufman, New York, NY: HarperPerennial (1996). pp417 (ages 14 and up). The book for GLBT youth and their allies. A great resource for anyone with an interest in GLBT youth issues. Nonfiction.

**From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun** Jacqueline Woodson, New York, NY: Blue Sky Press (1995). \$5.99, pp160. This novel imaginatively tackles such weighty issues as racism and sexuality.

**Girl Goddess #9: Nine Stories** Francesca Lia Black, New York, NY: HarperCollins (1996). \$7.99, pp792 (ages 14 and up). This collection of short stories is focused on girls who discover that the world is not a simple place and that there is more than one way to live.

**In The Tent** David Rees, Boston, MA: Alyson Pub (1983). \$2.25, pp208 (grades 5-6-good readers). Growing up Catholic and Gay. Mild, deals with only feelings.

**Jack** A.M. Homes, New York, NY: Vintage Books (1990). \$12.95, pp220 (ages 14 and up). Bond with 15 year-old Jack as he struggles to redefine the word “family” when his divorced father announces that he is gay.

**Lucy Goes to the Country** J. Kennedy and J. Canemaker, Boston, MA: Alyson Publications (1998). \$15.95 (grades K-2). Lucy the cat provides a “cat’s eye view” of life with her two dads and their adventures. The story offers lessons about different kinds of families and meeting new friends.

**Milkman's On His Way, The** David Reese, Boston, MA: Alyson Press (1982). \$7.95, pp118 (grades 5-6-good readers). A young boy grows up gay with accepting friends.

**No Big Deal** Ellen Jaffe McClain, New York, NY: Puffin (1997). \$4.99, pp192 (ages 9-12). Rumor has it that Janice Green’s teacher at her small New York school is gay, and the fourteen-year-old must work through her own values surrounding the issue. Puffin Books. Ages 9-12.

**Stir-Fry: A Novel** Emma A. Donoghue, New York, NY: HarperCollins (1994). pp.240 (ages 13 and up). 17 year old Maria lives with a lesbian couple in her first flat away from home. A touching coming of age story.

**Truth About Alex, The** (original title: Counter Play). Anne Snyder and Louis Pelletier, New York, NY: A Signet Book/New American Library (1981). \$2.75, pp. 166 (advanced 5th - 9). As seen on the HBO special of the same title. High School student's friendship is explored. Peer/parent pressure and coming out are the main themes.

**Ugly Ducking, The.** Hans Christian Anderson translated by Gruppo Editoriale Fab bri, New York, NY: Exter Books (1988). \$6.95, pp. 22. A delightful twist on a coming out story. Since Anderson was gay, the symbol of a swan has been adopted by PFLAG.

**Understanding Sexual Identity: A Book for Gay Teens and Their Friends.** Janice E. Rench, Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company (1990). pp. 59 (school library). An excellent book for the school library, printed with reinforced binding. This book will not try to determine a child's sexual orientation, but will dispel some of the myths about gays and lesbians and help readers better understand their own sexuality. Non-gay readers will learn how to be more supportive of their gay friends, and gay readers will learn that they are not alone.

**Truth About Alex, The** (original title: Counter Play). Anne Snyder and Louis Pelletier, New York, NY: A Signet Book/New American Library (1981). \$2.75, pp166 (advanced 5th-9). As seen on the HBO

# Increase Visibility and Access for LGBTQ Families



## Our Family Coalition

offers training and technical assistance for elementary schools, health, mental health and social service providers, so you can better serve Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) families with children. LGBTQ families live in every neighborhood in the Bay Area and report experiencing barriers to accessing social and health services.

"I was hospitalized shortly after giving birth. A doctor, seeing only my partner and my baby, asked 'Where's the dad? There's always a dad.' When vulnerable and seeking medical treatment, LGBTQ families should be focusing on health, not countering homophobia."

—BAY AREA LESBIAN MOM

## Our Family Coalition:

- Conducts pre-training meetings to clarify training needs.
- Conducts two or three hour LGBTQ Family Cultural Competency trainings for all staff. The trainings combine anti-bias curriculum with data about LGBTQ families and practical actions that schools, organizations and agencies can take to be more welcoming to LGBTQ families.
- Provides post-training technical assistance to work with staff to implement action steps identified during the training.
- Conducts evaluations to determine the impact of our work.

## Schedule a training

or request information by contacting the Training Coordinator, at [info@ourfamily.org](mailto:info@ourfamily.org) or 415-981-1960.



870 Market Street, Suite 872, San Francisco, CA 94102  
[www.ourfamily.org](http://www.ourfamily.org) | 415-981-1960

Our Family Coalition promotes the civil rights and well being of Bay Area lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer families with children and prospective parents through advocacy, education, social networking, and community organizing.

Our Family Coalition has grown to over 700 member families of more than 2,000 people, with many individuals and families participating in our activities.



# LGBTQ Access Program Training Request Form

To schedule a training, complete this training request form and return to Training Coordinator, via fax at 415-981-1962 or email at info@ourfamily.org.

We look forward to receiving your completed form and speaking further about our LGBTQ Access Program training at your organization. Thank you.

## Organization and Contact Information

**Organization Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Number Street City State Zip

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ **Website:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
First Last

**Contact Phone:** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Training Request Date and Time

*LGBTQ Access Program Cultural Competency trainings are a minimum of 2-3 hours.*

**Requested:** Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ AM / PM to \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ AM / PM

**1st Alternative:** Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ AM / PM to \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ AM / PM

**2nd Alternative:** Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ AM / PM to \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ AM / PM

## Additional Information

**Is this training (check one):**  Mandatory  Optional  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Has your organization previously participated in staff development trainings that focus on LGBTQ families:**  No  Yes — If yes, when was the most recent training: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**Please provide some background about your group and their interest in this LGBTQ Cultural Competency training.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**How did you hear about this training?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional information about your group/site:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Poster Order Form

## Our Family Coalition's Family Values Poster!

Fill in the information for your poster order below:

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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Make checks payable to Our Family Coalition or fill in credit card information below.

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Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Visa  Mastercard

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This beautiful, full-color 18" x 24" poster features LGBTQ families.

**ORDER YOURS TODAY!**

Posters are free to schools and nonprofit organizations. Shipping and handling charges apply.



Quantity	
Suggested Donation	\$8 per poster
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Donation	
Total:	

### MAIL COMPLETED ORDER FORMS TO:

Our Family Coalition  
870 Market Street, Suite 872  
San Francisco, CA 94102

### QUESTIONS?

Contact [rebecca@ourfamily.org](mailto:rebecca@ourfamily.org)  
or 415-981-1960.

Headquarters: 870 Market Street, Suite 872, San Francisco, CA 94102  
East Bay Office: 344 40th Street, Oakland 94609