

Showing Support for your LGBTQ or Questioning Child

As an individual or with your partner(s)

- Attend events for parents of LGBTQ individuals (such as PFLAG) to learn, find support for yourself, and show your child you are open to learning about their identity
- Talk to a therapist, counselor, or religious leaders about your concerns, anxieties, and discomfort, instead of your child
- Learn about LGBTQ individuals yourself
 - Read books and websites, talk to other LGBTQ individuals, etc to learn language and terms

With your child

- Take them to LGBTQ events
 - Pride events
 - Conferences
 - Fundraisers
- Find community centers or youth groups where they can meet other LGBTQ children/teens/youth
- Locate older LGBTQ individuals in the community who can serve as role models
 - Point out celebrities or other prominent figures who are LGBTQ or share a similar identity to your child
- Help them find age- and ability-appropriate reading material about LGBTQ people like them (novels, healthy relationship information, biographies, history, etc)
- Congratulate them on relationships, just like you would any relationship
 - Ask about their boyfriend/girlfriend
 - Invite their partner to family events/dinner/movie nights/etc
- Talk
 - About their identities, desires, etc
 - About their life, unrelated to their orientation or gender identity - they are more than just LGBTQ
- Provide age-appropriate, LGBTQ-friendly sex ed materials

With your family

- Attend LGBTQ events
- Movie/television nights - watch movies, documentaries, and television shows together about LGBTQ individuals and discuss them
 - ex) *TransGeneration*, *Milk*, *Glee*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *C.R.A.Z.Y*
 - <http://www.gsanetwork.org/files/resources/Movies.pdf>
- Find a church/temple and/or youth group that is queer-friendly
- Ask family, relatives, friends, etc to be respectful and supportive of your child, including use of the right names and pronouns for the child or (potential) partners

- Correct names and pronouns
- Model supportive and affirming behavior in your behavior and interactions with others (LGBTQ or otherwise)
 - If a tv show has a gay couple on it, make a positive comment about the couple
 - Ask people about their partners, rather than boyfriend/girlfriend depending on gender

Do...

- Think ahead
 - Prepare yourself and your child for events that might not be supportive of them and their identity, and have a plan for dealing with those events (e.g. family gatherings, bullying from peers, etc)
 - Coping skills
 - Talk to your child about who to tell about their identity, when, and how
 - Not everyone needs to know right away or at all
 - Investigate what support services, groups, etc are available for your child when they get older
 - ex) GSA groups for when they get to high school, LGBTQ friendly colleges
 - Find doctors who will be supportive of your child (especially if they are transgender) and their identities, and be able to connect with them when you need to
- Advocate for your child
 - ...if they are treated inappropriately due to their orientation or gender expression, or to prevent that from happening to begin with
 - ...for the inclusion of LGBTQ books, materials, and resources within the school (in the classroom or just in the library)
 - Even just thanking a teacher for including LGBTQ material can be supportive