Resource Guide

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Updated: 8/2013
Sooner Ally Overview

An Effective Ally...

- Respects confidentiality. Never disclose information about someone’s identity to anyone!
- Allows individuals to lead the direction of the conversation, lets them make their own choices, and listens, listens, listens.
- Talks to LGBTQ family, friends, and coworkers, and builds relationships with other allies.
- Avoids assumptions and stereotyping.
- Tries using gender-neutral terms when talking about significant others, spouses, and partners.
- Expects to make some mistakes, but doesn’t use them as an excuse for not acting. Despite fear, action is the only way to effect change in society as a whole.
- Acknowledges how homonegativity, transnegativity, and heterosexism have operated their lives.
- Educates themselves about issues facing LGBTQ people, and don’t be afraid to ask questions.
- Knows when and how to refer somebody to outside help, and to get professional intervention when necessary.
- Remembers that LGBTQ issues are not always sad ones. A student may come to you just to share joy or a story. You may also have heterosexual identified students come to you for LGBTQ information.
- Is visibly supportive by displaying the Sooner Ally symbol.

An Effective Ally Doesn’t...

- Have all the answers. You’re not an expert on the issues, and no one expects you to be one.
- Try to ‘fix’ problems.
- Think of people as “my gay student” or “my transgender friend”, and preface a statement on LGBTQ issues with “I’m straight, but…”
- Proceed with an interaction if boundaries or personal safety have been violated.

Source: University of Colorado at Boulder – Safe Zone Ally Training Education Program
LGBTQ Terminology

**Ally** – an individual who provides support and resources for all persons, regardless of their perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

**Biological Sex** – our packaging, typically categorized as male, female, or intersex, has a number of indicators of biological sex, including sex chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal reproductive organs, and external genitalia.

**Bisexual** – a term given to people who are attracted sexually, intellectually, emotionally, and/or spiritually to two gender identities, typically men and women.

**Cisgender** – describes someone who identifies as the gender identity assigned at birth, based on their physical sex.

**Coming Out** – refers to the process in which one acknowledges and accepts one’s own sexual orientation or gender identity. It also encompasses the process in which one discloses one’s sexual orientation to others.

**Gay** – a term given to males who are attracted sexually, intellectually, emotionally, and/or spiritually to some other males.

**Gender Binary** – the idea that there are only two genders, and that a person must be strictly gendered.

**Gender Expression** – the ways in which a person externally communicates gender identity in terms of clothing, hair, behavior, interests, etc. A person’s gender expression may or may not be consistent with socially prescribed gender roles, and may or may not reflect gender identity.

**Gender Identity** – a person’s internal sense or identity of being a man, woman, or somewhere in between.
Gender Role – society’s expectations about our behavior and appearance based on our biological sex.

Gender Queer – a person whose gender identity is neither man nor woman, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. This identity is usually related to or in reaction to the social construction of gender, gender stereotypes, and the gender binary system.

Heterosexism – assuming every person is heterosexual, therefore marginalizing those who do not identify as heterosexual. It is also a bias against homosexuality rooted in the belief that heterosexuality is superior or the norm.

Homonegativity – derived from homophobia, a term describing negative attitudes and feelings that devalue homosexuality or homosexual people, or those perceived to be homosexual. This can also be internalized in oneself.

In the Closet – refers to a homosexual, bisexual, trans, or intersex person who will not or cannot disclose their sex, sexuality, sexual orientation, or gender identity to their friends, family, co-workers, or society. There are varying degrees of being “in the closet”; for example, a person can be out in their social life, but in the closet at work, or with their family.

Intersex – a term used to describe a person whose biological sex is ambiguous. A person, born intersex, whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and/or genitals differs from one of the two expected patterns. “Intersex” and “transgender” are not synonymous, as intersex refers to a person’s biological sex, while transgender refers to a person’s gender identity.

- Generally, parents and medical care providers assign an intersex infant a sex at birth, and perform operations in order to have the infant’s body align with that sex. However, the medical field is showing progress with its practice and process in this area, as it is becoming increasingly controversial and challenged.
Lesbian – a term given to females who are attracted sexually, intellectually, emotionally, and/or spiritually to some other females.

Outing – involuntary disclosure of one’s own sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status.

Pansexual – a person who is attracted sexually, intellectually, emotionally, and/or spiritually to all or many gender identities.

Privilege – a right, advantage, or resource granted or available only to a particular person or group of people, and from which others are denied.

Queer – 1. An umbrella term which embraces a matrix of sexual preference and orientations of the not-exclusively-heterosexual-and-monogamous majority. Queer can include lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transpeople, intersex persons, and radical sex communities. 2. A reclaimed word that was formerly used solely as a slur but that has been semantically overturned by members of the maligned group, who use it as a term of defiant pride. Queer can be used as a personal identifier for sexual orientation or gender identity, or can be used politically to indicate solidarity with other members of the LGBTQ community (i.e. “queer-identified”)

Questioning – people who are in the process of figuring out their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Same-gender loving – a black culturally affirming description for homosexuals and bisexuals, particularly in the African American community. It is an alternative to the Eurocentric homosexual identities.

Sexual Identity – this is what we call ourselves in terms of our sexuality (gay, straight, lesbian, bi, etc.)

Sexual Orientation – this is determined by the sex of the person one is attracted to and encompasses our sexual drives, desires, and fantasies.
Transgender – an umbrella term used for people who do not match society’s expectations regarding gender and/or biological sex. The word “transgender” may include people who are transsexual, gender queer, gender variant, cross dressers, and gender nonconforming. Transgender people may or may not have medically changed their bodies through hormones and/or surgery.

- Stealth - This term refers to when a person chooses to be secretive in the public sphere about their gender history, either after transitioning or while successfully passing (also referred to as “going stealth” or “stealth mode”)

Transnegativity – derived from transphobia, a term describing negative attitudes and feelings towards those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity. It can be expressed as antipathy, contempt, prejudice, aversion, or hatred.

Transsexual – an antiquated term used to describe people who have medically transitioned from one gender to another. This term is grounded in medical and psychological communities. While some people still claim and use the word transsexual, many people prefer to use the term transgender rather than transsexual.

Two-spirit – formerly called berdache, is a Native American term for a transgender person, born as one biological sex and fulfilling at least some of the gender roles assigned to both sexes; considered to be part male and part female or wholly male and wholly female. Highly regarded and respected as artisans, craftspeople, and natural peace makers, two-spirits were considered to be touched by the spirits and to have powers on the order of a shaman.
Multisexual Identities Umbrella

Heterosexual

Lesbian

Gay

Asexual

Multisexual

Omnisexual

Bisexual

Pansexual

Pomosexual

Ambisexual

Anthrosexual

Fluid

*Note: These terms are subject to redefinition, change, and changes in frequency of use. Individuals have the right to identify and define themselves; this diagram is educational, but should not be considered definitive.

Multisexual: The sexual attraction to more than one gender

Bisexual: Attracted to one’s own gender and some other gender; can also mean being attracted to binary-identified men and women

Pansexual: Attracted to all or many gender expressions and biological sexes (see: omnisexual)

Omnisexual: Attracted to all or many gender expressions and biological sexes (see: pansexual)

Ambisexual: “Ambiguous” + sexual; useful for bisexuals who feel their attraction to each gender is equivalent

Anthrosexual: A sexual attraction to humans in general and does not refer to any sexual orientation or practice

Pomosexual: One who eschews all sexual orientation labels

Fluid: Rejects the notion that one can have a stable sexual orientation or that there are discrete genders to be attracted to
Myths & Realities of Bisexuality

Sexuality runs along a continuum. It is not a static “thing” but rather has the potential to change throughout one’s lifetime, and varies infinitely among people. We cannot fit our sexuality into nice neat categories, which determine who and what we are. Bisexuality exists at many points along the sexual continuum.

- **Myth:** Bisexuality doesn’t really exist. People who consider themselves bisexual are going through a phase, are confused, undecided or fence sitting. Ultimately, they’ll settle down and realize they’re actually homosexual or heterosexual.

**Reality:** Some people go through a transitional period of bisexuality on their way to adopting a lesbian/gay or heterosexual identity. For many others, a bisexual orientation remains a long-term orientation. For some bisexual people, same-sex attractions were a transitional phase in their coming out as bisexual. Many people may well be confused, living in a society where their sexuality is denied by gays and straight people, alike. Fence sitting is a misnomer; there is no “fence” between same-sex or heterosexual orientations except in the minds of people who rigidly divide the two.

- **Myth:** Bisexual people are equally attracted to both sexes. Bisexual means having concurrent lovers of both sexes.

**Reality:** Most bisexual people are primarily attracted to either men or women, but do not deny the lesser attraction, regardless of whether they act on it. Some bisexual people are never sexual with men, women or either. A bisexual orientation is about dreams, desires and capacities as much as it about acts. Bisexual people can have lovers of either sex, not must have lovers of both sexes. Promiscuity is no more prevalent in the bisexual population than in other groups.

- **Myth:** Bisexual people are promiscuous hypersexual swingers who are attracted to every woman and man they meet. They cannot be monogamous, nor can they marry or live in traditional committed relationships.

**Reality:** Bisexual people have a range of sexual behaviors. Like lesbian, gay or heterosexual people, some have multiple partners, some have one partner, and some go through periods without any partners. Promiscuity is no more prevalent in the bisexual population than in other groups.

- **Myth:** Politically, bisexual people are traitors to the gay/lesbian liberation. They pass as heterosexual to avoid trouble and maintain heterosexual privilege.

**Reality:** Obviously, there are bisexual people who pass as heterosexual to avoid trouble. There are also many lesbians and gay men who do this too. To “pass” for heterosexual and deny the part of you that loves people of the same gender is just as painful and damaging for a bisexual person as is for a lesbian or gay person. Politicized bisexual people remain aware of heterosexual privileges and are committed enough to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights to not abandon LGBTQ communities when in heterosexual relationships.

Source: Duke University’s “SAFE on Campus Manual.

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The Transgender Umbrella

The Basics

sex: one's physical aspects (chromosomes, hormones, genitalia)
gender: one's psychological and sociological aspects
gender identity: one's psychological sense of self; one's identity; who someone is intrinsically
gender presentation or gender expression: how one presents oneself in society
gender role: the social role someone takes in society
orientation: who someone is attracted to; can be declared relative to one's gender (not sex),
can be declared simply as the partner's gender, or can be completely unrelated to gender
all of these attributes are independent of each other (there are straight transwomen, lesbian
transwomen, straight transmen, gay transmen, and everything in-between)

transgender: adj. describes one whose gender identity
does not match their sex at birth; more generally, can
describe one whose existence challenges the idea that
gender exists only as two mutually exclusive categories
of male and female (the gender binary)

transsexual: one whose sex at
birth is "opposite" their gender
identity; i.e. one who was
born with male parts but
is actually female (MTF or
male-to-female; a
transwoman) or one who
was born with female parts but
is actually male (FTM or
female-to-male; a transman)

crossdresser: one who
wears clothing intended
for the "opposite" gender
for personal comfort or
relaxation
transvestite: usually an
offensive term, especially
when used incorrectly;
one who wears clothing
intended for the "opposite"
gender for sexual satisfaction
drag queen or
drag king: one
who wears clothing
intended for the
"opposite" gender
for the entertain-
ment of others

bigender: one whose gender
identity is both male and female
at the same time; may exhibit
aspects of both

androgyne: one whose gender
identity is somewhere in-between
male and female; may exhibit
some aspects of one and some
of the other

agender: one who has no gender
at all
genderqueer: one whose gender identity
is something completely different from
male or female; may also include the
other gender identities on this side of
the umbrella

third and fourth: two genders that
exist outside of "male" and "female";
like male and female, they cannot really
be defined as anything other than
themselves
gender fluid: one whose gender
identity can change
(for most people, including most
transpeople, gender identity cannot
be changed; however, some people
can change their gender identity)

Standard Disclaimer: This is one transperson's understanding of the meaning of these terms. Others may have a different understanding and define these terms slightly differently. Created by Rebecca G. Bettencourt; Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo; Jan 9, 2009. Format based on an adaptation from Arizona State University's SafeZone Gender Identity 101 curriculum.
The Transgender Umbrella

Transgender
An umbrella term used for people who do not match society’s expectations regarding gender and/or biological sex. The word “transgender” may include people who are transsexual, gender queer, gender variant, cross dressers, and gender nonconforming, but can be someone of any sexual orientation. Transgender people may or may not have medically changed their bodies through hormones and/or surgery.

- **Stealth** - This term refers to when a person chooses to be secretive in the public sphere about their gender history, either after transitioning or while successfully passing (also referred to as “going stealth” or “stealth mode”)

Transsexual
An antiquated term used to describe people who have medically transitioned from one gender to another. This term is grounded in medical and psychological communities. While some people still claim and use the word transsexual, many people prefer to use the term transgender rather than transsexual.

Cross Dressers
A term for those who are comfortable with their physical gender at birth, but will occasionally dress and take on the mannerisms of the opposite gender. As it has nothing to do with sexual orientation, cross dressers are often heterosexual men.

Intersex
A term used to describe a person whose biological sex is ambiguous. A person, born intersex, whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and/or genitals differs from one of the two expected patterns. “Intersex” and “transgender” are not synonymous, as intersex refers to a person’s biological sex, while transgender refers to a person’s gender identity.

- Generally, parents and medical care providers assign an intersex infant a sex at birth, and perform operations in order to have the infant’s body align with that sex. However, the medical field is showing progress with its practice and process in this area, as it is becoming increasingly controversial and challenged.
Drag Performers
Dress and act like the “opposite” sex for entertainment. For them, drag is a job or play, it is not an identity. Some are gay, some are not. Some identify as transgender but most do not.

Gender Bender/Gender Queer
A term for someone living outside the standard gender norms, or do not easily fit into the traditional categories as they may be constraining. An individual may have a mix of male and female characteristics, masculine (“butch”) lesbians, effeminate men (“queens”), and many gender expressions in between.

Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation: What’s the Difference?
To put it simply, gender identity is self identified, and is our internal sense of who we are in terms of being a man, woman, or somewhere in between. Sexual orientation is also self identified, and refers to whom you are attracted sexually, intellectually, emotionally, and/or spiritually, as we are attracted to people for different reasons. Some view them as two completely separate concepts. For others, the two are intricately entwined. Either way, what is most important is that a certain gender identity does not necessarily mean a certain sexual orientation. A person who is transgender may be gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight. Additionally, there are male to females who identify as lesbian and females to males who identify as gay men.

Working with Transgender Youth

No single group has gone more unnoticed by society, or abused and maltreated by institutional powers, than youth with transgender needs and feelings. With the exception of its attention to child labor and child abuse or neglect law, our society has relegated children to a class virtually without voice or rights in society.

- Center for AIDS Prevention Studies.

In recent years, many programs for LGBTQ youth have witnessed an increased presence of youth who self-identify as transgender. Youth who do not conform to prevalent gender norms, usually represented as feminine women and masculine men, often experience severe harassment, discrimination, ostracism, and violence. Transgender youth are increasingly claiming their right to define and express themselves in new ways. These new ways include, but are not limited to, hormone treatment, gender reassignment surgery, name change, and cross-living. Professionals who work with LGBTQ youth, in particular, increasingly observe the diverse ways in which these youth choose to identify, including making the choice not to identify.

Youth-serving professionals, parents, families, peers, and community members can play key roles in supporting the healthy development of transgender youth. Respecting transgender youth means taking responsibility for providing them with a safe and supportive environment. The following recommendations will not answer all your questions, but they can assist you.

- Don’t make assumptions! Do not assume that you know a youth’s gender, or that a youth has gender identity issues, just as you would not make assumptions about a young person’s sexual orientation. Exploring gender is a healthy expression of personal development. Self-identification or self-acknowledgement is a crucial first step in a youth’s identity development and self-expression.

- Create a safe space for open discussion. Work towards creating an affirming environment that supports non-stereotypical gender expression and offers safe space for open discussion. Use inclusive, affirming, non-presumptuous, nonjudgmental, and gender-neutral language. Create organizational norms on behavior and language with youth.
• Be informed and don’t be afraid to examine your own beliefs. Most of us are products of a society that holds to rigid gender roles, and we have been influenced by our cultural background. We’re taught what is feminine and masculine, female and male, and we expect that these bipolar categories do not change. Recognize your level of comfort with different types of gender expression and how this can affect your interactions with youth. Don’t be afraid to ask questions.

• Seek to fully understand gender identity. Each person’s gender identity is natural to that person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are a part of each of us and often develop uniquely. Across human experience, gender identity may be experienced as a continuum. That is, some people do not experience gender solely as female or male. It is important for youth-serving professionals to educate themselves on gender identity, sexual identity, adolescent development, and sexual and social stereotypes. Moreover, sexuality and gender expression are only two of the aspects integral to a whole person. It is important to maintain a balanced perspective in addressing the multifaceted issues of youth’s development.

• Respect confidentiality. When a young person shares personal information about gender identity, you have achieved the trust of that youth. A breach of this confidence can have dire consequences for the young person. If it truly becomes necessary to share the information, first get the young person’s permission.

• Know when and where to seek help. Be aware of appropriate referral agencies for crisis intervention, mental and physical health services, emergency assistance, etc. Transgender youth are often subject to abuse, homelessness.

These tips are from a resource manual on gender identity and transgender youth issues, written by Charlene Leach and published by the National Youth Advocacy Coalition. The tips first appeared in Transitions, volume 14, issue 4, © Advocates for Youth, 2002. Transgender is an umbrella term for all whose self-identity is outside the boundaries of biological sex and/or culturally determined gender expression, including transsexual people, cross dressers, Two-Spirit people, drag performers, and people who do not self-identify with their biological sex.
Gender Neutral Pronouns Chart

The following chart is a quick reference guide to traditional and gender neutral pronouns. Four versions of gender neutral pronouns are included. Many others exist, but this chart should help you conjugate any type of pronoun. When in doubt, ask.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective</th>
<th>She</th>
<th>He</th>
<th>Ze</th>
<th>Sie/Zie</th>
<th>Zie</th>
<th>Ey</th>
<th>Per</th>
<th>They</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Her</td>
<td>Him</td>
<td>Zim</td>
<td>Hir</td>
<td>Zir</td>
<td>Em</td>
<td>Per</td>
<td>Them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive Adjective</td>
<td>Her</td>
<td>His</td>
<td>Zir</td>
<td>Hir</td>
<td>Zir</td>
<td>Eir</td>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>Their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive Pronoun</td>
<td>Hers</td>
<td>His</td>
<td>Zirs</td>
<td>Hirs</td>
<td>Zirs</td>
<td>Eirs</td>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>Theirs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive Pronunciation</td>
<td>Herself</td>
<td>Himself</td>
<td>Zirself</td>
<td>Hirs</td>
<td>Zirself</td>
<td>Eirself</td>
<td>Persself</td>
<td>Themself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>as it looks</td>
<td>as it looks</td>
<td>as it looks</td>
<td>zee, here, heres, hereself</td>
<td>zee, zere, zeres, zereself</td>
<td>a, m, ear, earself</td>
<td>as it looks</td>
<td>as it looks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D’Augelli’s Model of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identity Development

D’Augelli identified six interactive and fluid processes (not stages) involved in lesbian, gay, and bisexual identity development. These are considered processes, as not every LGB individual will have the same experience, feel the need to go through a specific process, or do so in any fixed order.

*Exiting heterosexual identity*
Recognition that one’s feelings and attractions are not heterosexual as well as telling others that one is lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

*Developing a personal lesbian/gay/bisexual identity status*
A “sense of personal socio-affective stability that effectively summarizes thoughts, feelings, and desires” (D’Augelli 1994). One must also challenge internalized myths about what it means to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Developing a personal identity status must be done in relationship with others who can confirm ideas about what it means to be nonheterosexual.

*Developing a lesbian/gay/bisexual social identity*
Creating a support network of people who know and accept one’s sexual orientation allows the individual to develop in a health social environment. Determining people’s true reactions can take time. Reactions may also change over time and with changing circumstances.

*Becoming a lesbian/gay/bisexual offspring*
Disclosing one’s identity to parents and redefining one’s relationship after such disclosure. D’Augelli noted that establishing a positive relationship with one’s parents can take time but is possible with education and patience. This developmental process is particularly troublesome for many college students who depend on their parents for financial as well as emotional support.
**Developing a lesbian/gay/bisexual intimacy status**

This is a more complex process than achieving an intimate heterosexual relationship because of the invisibility of lesbian and gay couples in our society. “The lack of cultural scripts directly applicable to lesbian/gay/bisexual people leads to ambiguity and uncertainty, but it also forces the emergence of personal, couple-specific, and community norms, which should be more personally adaptive” (D’Augelli, 1994).

**Entering a lesbian/gay/bisexual community**

Making varying degrees of commitment to social and political action. Some individuals never take this step; others do so only at great personal risk, such as losing their jobs or housing.


When Someone Comes Out to You...

Be a role model of acceptance. The LGBTQ person has likely spent some time thinking about whether or not to tell you, and is aware of the risks that come with telling.

Ask questions that demonstrate compassion. Don’t ask questions that would be considered rude before the disclosure. The person has the same sensibilities as before. However, you might need to do some “catching up”. Some good questions to ask are:

- How long have you known you were LGBTQ?
- Is there someone special in your life?
- Has it been hard for you carrying this secret?
- Is there some way I can help?
- Have I ever offended you unknowingly?

Appreciate the person’s courage and trust. Thank them for sharing with you, and follow up later to see how they’re doing.

Have a sense of humor. While it is important to take the disclosure seriously, a little gentle humor might ease any tension the LGBTQ person is feeling.

Offer support. Ask if you might be available as the person comes out to others.

Be prepared to give a referral. If there are questions you can’t answer, or if the person is feeling isolated, be prepared to refer them to a hotline, community center, LGBTQ group, or sympathetic counselor.

Listen, listen, listen. Coming out is a long process, and chances are you’ll be approached again to discuss this process and its challenges.

Assure confidentiality. The person may not be ready to come out to others, or would like to do so in their own way.

Source: GLSEN Safe Space
Coming Out to Families

Before coming out to their families (particularly parents), LGBTQ individuals should be fully comfortable with their orientation. While each family is unique, many parents go through a range of emotions upon learning their child is gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. Below are several questions LGBTQ individuals should consider prior to coming out to their parents.

Are you sure about your sexual orientation?
Don’t raise the issue unless you’re able to respond with confidence to the question: “Are you sure?” Confusion on your part will increase your parents’ and friends’ confusion and decrease their confidence in your conclusions.

Are you comfortable with your sexuality?
If you’re wrestling with guilt and periods of depression, it would be better to wait to tell your parents and friends. Coming out to them may require tremendous energy on your part; it will require a reserve of positive self-image.

Do you have support?
In the event that your parents and friends’ reactions devastate you, there should be someone or a group that you can confidently turn to for emotional support and strength. Maintaining your sense of self-worth is critical.

Are you knowledgeable about homosexuality?
Your parents and friends may respond based on information they have received from a homophobic society throughout their lifetime. If you’ve done some serious reading on the subject, you’ll be able to assist them by sharing reliable information and research.

What’s the emotional climate at home?
If you have the choice of when to tell family, consider the timing. Choose a time when they’re not dealing with such matters as the death of a close friend, pending surgery, or the loss of a job.
Can you be patient?
Your parents and friends will require time to deal with this information if they haven’t considered it prior to your sharing. The process may last from six months to two years.

What’s your motive for coming out now?
Hopefully, it is because you love them and are uncomfortable with the distance you feel. Never come out in anger or during an argument, using your sexuality as a weapon.

Do you have available resources?
Homosexuality is a subject most non-gay people know little about. Have available at least one of the following: a book written for parents or friends, a contact for the local or national P-FLAG chapter, or the name of a non-gay counselor who can fairly deal with the issue.

Source: P-FLAG brochure, “Read This Before Coming Out to Your Parents.” (www.pflag.org)

Updated: 8/2013
Coming Out in Communities of Color

African Americans and Coming Out
Coming out can be one of the most challenging events in one’s life, but also one of the most rewarding. Being attracted to someone of the same sex or understanding that one’s gender identity is different from his/her biological sex can be frightening. Some African Americans feel pressure to prioritize their different identities. For many African Americans, coming out involves additional cultural factors that make the process more challenging but no less rewarding. Some of those challenges include associations with often homophobic churches, strong family foundations that emphasize heterosexuality, homophobia in the black community and racism in the broader gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Thanks, however, to brave LGBTQ African American activists and their allies effecting change in the church and the community, there is more support and acceptance than ever before.

Latinas/Latinos and Coming Out
Although Latina/o Americans come from various cultural backgrounds, many who come out as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender share similar experiences and challenges. Some, who were raised Roman Catholic, must reconcile themselves with the church’s teachings that to act on one’s homosexuality is sinful. Language differences often make finding resources and support difficult, and a lack of LGBTQ Latinas/os in media and entertainment perpetuates invisibility. Fortunately, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that a growing number of Latinas/os are coming out. Many LGBTQ people of color report that after they come out, they are able to communicate better with their family and friends. Coming out at home, at work, in churches and schools will also further the visibility of LGBTQ people and help ensure that those who are still in the closet know they are not alone.
Asian Pacific Americans and Coming Out

For many Asian Pacific Americans, coming out to family is an enormous challenge. Many fear rejection, disappointing their parents or being seen as sullying the family name. Even with Asian Pacific American support groups in some communities, it can be a challenge to get parents to attend. It is not unusual for a GLBT Asian Pacific American to be out in every aspect of life - except to family. Some find it easier to be out to work colleagues, friends and neighbors than to be out at home. Each person’s coming out is a personal journey and not being out to family may work for you. It’s also possible that they already know, but the topic is never discussed. Still, when parents are aware of a child’s sexual orientation or gender identity, that information is often hidden from family friends. Some Asian Pacific Americans find it is helpful to come out to their families in their native language. The strong family ties that often dampen a child’s willingness to come out can also turn into support and advocacy once a GLBT Asian Pacific American has decided to be open and honest at home.

Source: P-FLAG’s Communities of Color Web site (www.pflag.org)
Homophobia

Homophobia is the irrational fear and/or hatred of LGBTQ people because these individuals do not conform to traditional sex-role stereotypes. Homophobia can take many forms. Some homophobic people may be subtle in their language and actions, whereas others are overtly hateful and mean. Extreme homophobia can lead to hate crimes and other malicious, hurtful acts against LGBTQ people.

Riddle Scale of Homophobia

Homophobic Levels of Attitude

Repulsion
Homosexuality is seen as a crime against nature. Gays/lesbians are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them: prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy, violence, etc.

Pity
Heterosexual chauvinism. Heterosexuality is more mature and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of becoming “straight” should be reinforced, and those who seem to be born that way should be pitied.

Tolerance
Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people grow out of. Thus, gays/lesbians are less mature than heterosexuals and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Gays and lesbians should not be given positions of authority because they are still working through their adolescent behavior.

Acceptance
Still implies there is something to accept. Characterized by such statements as “you’re not a lesbian, you’re a person” or “what you do is your own business” or “it’s fine with me, just don’t flaunt it.”
**Positive Levels of Attitude**

**Support**
Work to safeguard the rights of lesbians and gays. People at this level may be uncomfortable themselves but they are aware of the homophobic climate and irrational unfairness.

**Admiration**
Acknowledges that being gay/lesbian in our society takes strength. People at this level are willing to truly examine their homophobic attitudes, values, and behaviors.

**Appreciation**
Value the diversity of people and see gays/lesbians as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.

**Nurturance**
Assumes that gay/lesbian people are indispensable in our society. They view gays/lesbians with genuine affection and delight, and are willing to be allies and advocates.

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Updated: 8/2013
Responding to Anti-LGBTQ Bias

Homophobia, transphobia, and heterosexism manifest themselves in many different ways, from physical violence and verbal harassment to assumptions of heterosexuality and exclamations of “that’s so gay!” Different situations call for different responses, but all situations call for a calm, non-inflammatory response. Bullying back is never a good idea. Your role as an ally is to diffuse situations of anti-LGBTQ bias, educate others about why it’s harmful and unacceptable, and provide support to the person who has been targeted. Below are some ideas for dealing with anti-LGBTQ bias.

Name It, Claim It, and Stop It!
This technique is great in most situations where someone is being teased, name-called, or verbally bullied. It gives you the opportunity to spotlight the behavior, take a personal stand on it and attempt to keep it from happening again.

Name it: When you witness bias, call the offending party on it by saying, “That term is not good,” or “Using words like that is hurtful and offensive.”

Claim it: Make it YOUR issue. Say, “I have people I care about who are LGBTQ, and I don’t like to hear those words.”

Stop it: Make a request for the behavior to stop by saying, “Please don’t use those words”, or “Cut it out, please.”

Get Help
In situations where talking to the person hasn’t stopped the harassment, or where you have a feeling the trouble will continue to escalate despite your intervention, get help immediately. Trust your instincts. **Being an ally does not mean you should compromise your safety at any time.**

Give Emotional First Aid
Don’t get so caught up in addressing the bias that you forgot the person who was being picked on. If you’ve diffused a situation, always be sure to ask the person if they’re all right, if there’s anything you can do to help, and if they’d like to talk further or take a short walk to cool off. Remind them that the behavior was not their fault by saying something like, “That person was out of line. They obviously have a problem, and it’s not you. You’re all right just the way you are.”

Source GLSEN Safe Space.
Heterosexual Privileges for College Students

As a heterosexual student

- I am privileged to be able to be free of fear and walk across campus holding my girl/boyfriend’s hand.

- I am privileged that I can be a member of ROTC without fear of being “found out” and losing my scholarship as well as my career plans.

- I am privileged to join a fraternity or sorority without being rejected based on my sexual identity.

- I am privileged to be able to talk freely about my “relationships” with roommates, friends and family.

- I am privileged to play varsity sports without the fear of being removed from the team because of my sexual orientation or gender identity.

- I am privileged to walk into any bar or dance with my partner without fear of being verbally or physically abused.

- I am privileged to interview for jobs and be able to discuss my plans for marriage and/or my partner without fear of being discriminated against.

- I am privileged to run for a student leadership position without students focusing on my sexual orientation or gender identity.

- I am privileged that I am a member of the dominant culture and I may choose to be an ally for LGBTQ students.

Source: University of Colorado at Boulder – Safe Zone Ally Training Education Program
Heterosexual Questionnaire

The following questions are reversals of questions frequently asked of Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals. If you are not LGB identified, how would you feel if these were asked of you?

1. What do you think caused your heterosexuality?

2. When and how did you first decide you were a heterosexual? Was there something that happened to you?

3. Is it possible your heterosexuality stems from a neurotic fear of others of the same sex?

4. Is it possible your heterosexuality is it just a phase you may grow out of?

5. Isn't it possible that all you need is a good Lesbian or Gay lover? Have you ever had a positive Lesbian or Gay experience?

6. Heterosexuals have histories of failure in Lesbian and Gay relationships: Do you think you may have turned to heterosexuality out of fear of failing again?

7. If you've never slept with a person of the same sex, how do you know you wouldn't prefer that?

8. If heterosexuality is normal, why are a disproportionate number of mental patients heterosexual?

9. The great majority of child molesters (9001 plus) are heterosexuals. Do you really consider it safe to expose your children to heterosexual teachers?

10. Why do you insist on being so obvious and making a public spectacle of your heterosexuality? Can't you just be what you are and keep it to yourself?

11. How could the human race survive if everyone were heterosexual, considering the menace of overpopulation?

12. Why are heterosexuals so promiscuous?
Heterosexual Ally Development Model

Poynter (1999)

Status 1: Pre-Contact (Non-identification)
Heterosexual person in Status 1 and 2 begin to abandon heterosexism and homophobia. Some awareness of different sexual orientations and gender identities exist as movie, books, magazines, and newspapers (media) cover LGBTQ issues. This person will not have a close contact with a LGBTQ person(s). This person will believe that heterosexuals and heterosexual relationships are superior to LGBTQ people and their relationships. This person will also have a strong negative attitude toward LGBTQ people, and will not identify as an ally.

Status 2: Contact and Retreat
Heterosexual person has a personal contact with a LGBTQ person that is a family member, friend, or co-worker. Heterosexuals are still normal and superior to LGBTQ people. This personal contact leads to a discovery that LGBTQ people are human beings. Some heterosexuals may experience a hyper-vigilance or be focused on associations with LGBTQ people which leads to a close relationship with the LGBTQ community. Personal contact is a transition to status 3 that will lead to an increase in knowledge, awareness and reduction in negative attitudes.

Retreat: Heterosexual person will be essentially closed to LGBTQ issues and understanding due to a variety of issues such as religious beliefs, cultural beliefs, conformity to masculine ideals (if male) and gender roles, and will possess a dualistic reasoning based on these previous issues. This person will retreat to a Status 1.

*Some heterosexual people may begin to identify as an ally (Status 3 and 4) without a personal contact due to less restrictive religious beliefs, liberal views, and moral development such as a desire to help others or to please an authority figure. Status 2 will be temporarily skipped. This person will eventually experience a Status 2 contact, but until then will have varied development as an ally.

Status 3: Internal Identification
Heterosexuals in Status 3 and 4 begin to develop a positive identity as an ally to the LGBTQ community. Ally in Status 3 does not publicly identify as an ally yet, but further initial contact with the LGBTQ community will occur. Communication with other heterosexual people that publicly (Status 4) identify as allies will occur. The new ally will begin to realize the importance of being supportive of LGBTQ people and begins to practice these support and advocacy skills in a limited fashion. This person will possess less negative attitudes toward LGBTQ people and a higher level of awareness and knowledge.
Status 4: External Identification
The heterosexual individual will have pride in being an ally to LGBTQ people. Realization of how much fuller their lives are since they know out LGBTQ people and include them within their lives. This person will respect and appreciation for the similarities and differences among people with different sexual orientations and gender identities. Ally will have low negative attitudes and a high level of awareness and knowledge. Ally will have some support and advocacy skills and will know other heterosexual allies among their friends, family, and colleagues. Feelings of alienation from other heterosexual people that are not allies will occur as a result of public identification as an ally. Various coping strategies will be used when dealing with negative responses and attitudes toward the ally.
Religious Views of LGBTQ

It may seem as if there is one religious view — a negative one — about gays and lesbians because conservative political and religious organizations have dominated public discussion on this issue. There is no one religious stance on the issue. There are communities of faith who are quietly contemplating the challenges faced by the gay and lesbian population and working within their communities to ensure the human integrity and spiritual dignity of gay and lesbian people.

Following is a list of the major denominations in the United States and their current position. It should be noted that there are dissenting views within each religion and between leaders within the same denomination.

Roman Catholic Church
Permits openly gay people to join and participate fully in the church. The church does not consider gay or lesbian orientation to be wrong because it is not a choice. Teaches that any sexual activity outside marriage is wrong — gay and lesbians are expected to remain celibate for life. Condemns prejudice and discrimination against gay and lesbian people as sinful and supports the basic human rights of all gay and lesbian people.

Baptist
Considers homosexuality a sin, but officially lets openly gay people join, although there are differing views between the American Baptists and Southern Baptists, and individual churches are autonomous. The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) even goes so far as to express antipathy not only for gay and lesbian people but also for any individual or institution that acknowledges, accepts, or supports them. The SBC insists that gay and lesbian people remain celibate, or, more commonly, change their orientation through prayer and controversial reparative techniques (which have been judged unproven and potentially harmful by several professional associations).

United Methodist Church
Permits openly gay people to join and does not officially consider homosexuality a sin, but homosexual activity is considered incompatible with Christian teaching and therefore a sin. The church supports basic human rights and civil liberties for all gay and lesbian people. Ministers are forbidden from blessing gay and lesbian unions, although a group of Methodist ministers has declared that they will perform same gender unions. Non-celibate gay and lesbian people may not be ordained as ministers.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ECLA)
Has no official judgment about the morality of gay and lesbian sexual activity.

Updated: 8/2013
The church does not approve of ministers’ blessing gay and lesbian unions as an official action of the church, but there is no policy for disciplining a minister who does so. Gays and lesbians may be ordained as clergy only if they remain celibate.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)
Does not let openly gay people join and considers homosexuality a sin. The church recommends chastity for gays and lesbians, and argues that those who feel attracted to someone of the same sex are either misguided or willfully sinful. Members are taught to resist and repent of all feelings, thoughts and acts based on same-sex attraction and are urged to undergo controversial reparative therapy counseling.

Orthodox Judaism
Does not recognize a gay or lesbian orientation and rejects sexual relations between gay and lesbian people as sinful.

Conservative Judaism
They do not consider a gay or lesbian orientation sinful. Openly welcomes gay and lesbian members, and supports nondiscrimination policies against gay and lesbian people in civil society. Does not support the blessing of gay and lesbian unions, accept openly gay and lesbian seminary students, or condone the ordination of gay or lesbian rabbis.

Reform Judaism
The do not consider a gay or lesbian orientation sinful. Openly welcomes gay and lesbian members, and supports nondiscrimination policies against gay and lesbian people. They support the rights of gay and lesbian people to be married, and accepts openly gay and lesbian seminary students. They also permit rabbis to bless gay and lesbian couples.

Reconstructionist Judaism
Holds the same position as the Reform Movement except that it also officially sanctions the blessing of gay and lesbian unions and considers them the equivalent of heterosexual marriages.

Presbyterian Church
Welcomes gay and lesbian people and condemns those who would judge or mistreat them. The church expresses opposition to any federal, state, and local legislation that discriminates against persons on the basis of sexual orientation. Does not prohibit the blessing of gay and lesbian unions, and forbids the ordination of non-celibate gay and lesbian ministers.

Local Places of Worship – LGBTQ Friendly

Our allies have identified local places of worship that are LGBTQ friendly and affirming.

Cathedral of Hope OKC, 3901 NW 63rd St, OKC, www.cohokc.com
“LGBTQ friendly”

Central Spiritualist Church, 2348 NW 36th St, OKC
“LGBTQ friendly, for sure!”

Church of the Open Arms, 3131 N. Pennsylvania, OKC, www.openarms.org
“LGBTQ friendly and open and affirming”

Epworth United Methodist Church, 1901 N. Douglas, OKC, www.epworth-okc.org
“LGBTQ friendly”

First Christian Church of Norman, 220 S. Webster, Norman, www.fccnorman.org
“The residing minister is very accepting of an inclusive community and stands with the denominations belief that there should be support of the gay, lesbian, and transgendered community”

First Unitarian Church, 600 Northwest 13th street, OKC, www.uuokc.org
“Is officially a welcoming congregation”

Hillel Jewish Center, 492 Elm, Norman, ouhillel.org
“very open to the LGBTQ community”

Morning Star, 329 S. Peters, Norman, www.morningstarcenter.org
“Non-denominational group that would be very welcoming”

Norman Friends Meeting (Quakers), St. Anselm of Canterbury Episcopal University Center, 800 Elm Avenue. For more information about the meeting and related events, see http://normanquakers.org or contact Dorothy Foster at 405-321-7971 foster_dorothy@yahoo.com.
“As an affirming and welcoming community, we invite all to our meetings for worship and other gatherings. We treasure and support our LGBTQ members, and all who join us, in accordance with our long-standing Quaker tradition of Equality, that is, respect for all persons.”

“Welcome and affirm all persons without regard to any of the divisions which have been used to separate God’s family such as ethnicity, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability.”

West Wind Unitarian, 1309 W. Boyd St, Norman,
“Welcoming congregation”
LGBTQ Resource List

Campus Resources

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Friends Student Group
GLBTF@ou.edu
325-4452
www.ou.edu/glbtf
Facebook: Search Groups for – GLBTF

LGBTA – OU Tulsa
Lori Franklin, Advisor
lfranklin@ou.edu
(918) 660-3350

OU Tulsa Counseling
Schusterman Center, Room 1C53
mary-m-parker@ouhsc.edu
(918) 660-3109

University Counseling Center
Goddard, 2nd floor - 325-2911

OUHSC Counseling Services
405-271-7336 or counselors@ouhsc.edu

OU Psychology Clinic
2709 Lawrence Ave. - 325-2914

Women’s Outreach Center
lgbtq.ou.edu
OMU Room 247 – 325-4929
lgbtq@ou.edu

Updated: 8/2013
Community Resources

Cimarron Alliance Foundation – advocacy and education organization for LGBTQ Oklahomans. 5613 N. May Ave, Ste 400, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 495-9300  Cimarronalliance.org

TransOK – support group for gender variant and trans identified young adults, ages 16-30, and their allies  Weekly meetings on Saturdays from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at Cimarron Alliance.

DeQH – A helpline for South Asian lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people. (908) 367-3374 (Thursdays and Sundays from 7 – 9 pm)

The Norman Monday Night GLBT Support Group – Adult support group for those 18 and up. Meets from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the West Wind Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 1309 Boyd 360-4497

Peer listening line for LGBTQ Youth under 25  1-800-399-PEER (7337)

The Trevor Helpline (24/7 confidential hotline for gay and questioning teens) 1-866-488-7386  www.thetrevorproject.org

Planned Parenthood Central Oklahoma  Transgender medical care  528-2157

Planned Parenthood Tulsa  LGBT Services (855) 841-7526

PFLAG Norman (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)  www.pflagnorman.org  360-4497

PFLAG Tulsa  www.pflagtulsa.org (918) 749-4901

Updated: 8/2013
National Gay/ Lesbian Helpline
www.glnh.org
1-888-843-4564 (Mon.-Fri. 5 – 9 pm, Sat. 11-4pm)

Norman Queer Alliance – social group in Norman
http://www.normanqueeralliance.tumblr.com

The Equality Network – political advocacy in Oklahoma
www.thequalitynetwork.org
(918) 671-3733

Oklahomans for Equality
Dennis R. Neill Equality Center
621 E. 4th Street
Tulsa, OK
(918) 743-4297
LGBT Community Center

Web Resources - General

Colage
www.colage.org
Web site for children of LGBTQ parents.

Youth Resource
www.youthresource.com
Web site for LGBTQQ youth.

Human Rights Watch
www.hrc.org
Web site with resources for challenging homophobia.

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
www.pflag.org
Many resources to help professionals support LGBTQQ people.

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network
www.glsen.org
Resources for educators and students. Source for “Tackling Gay Issues in School” curriculum, as well as others.
Advocates for Youth
www.advocatesforyouth.org
Lesson plans on diversity and sexuality, printable pamphlets by youth for youth on LGBTQ issues.

It Gets Better Project
www.itgetsbetter.org
A campaign to help inspire LGBTQ individuals and allies that change needs to happen to help those who struggle with their identity.

Athlete Ally
www.athleteally.org
Focuses on ending homonegativity and transnegativity in sports.

The Lambda 10 Project
www.campuspride.org/lambda10/
Targeted for LGBTQ fraternity/sorority students, great resource for gay and Greek issues.

National Campus Pride
www.campuspride.org
Online community for student leaders of LGBTQ organizations.

Delta Lambda Phi
www.dlp.org
National social fraternity for gay, bi and progressive men.

National Youth Advocacy Coalition
www.nyacyouth.org
Advocates to end discrimination

Gay, Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation
www.glaad.org

BiNetUSA
www.binetusa.org

National Center for Lesbian Rights
www.nclrights.org
Gay and Lesbian Medical Association
www.glma.org

US Library of Medicine: Gay and Lesbian Health
Deaf Queer  
www.deafqueer.org

Service Members Legal Defense Network  
www.sldn.org

Queer Resources Directory  
www.qrd.org

Web Resources - Career

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force  
www.thetaskforce.org

Pride at Work  
www.prideatwork.org

Web Resources - Race and Ethnicity

Blacklight – a site for African American lesbians and gay men  
www.blacklightonline.com

Gay Asian Pacific Alliance  
www.gapa.org

Gay Asian Pacific Support Network  
www.gapsn.org

Gay and Lesbian Arabic Society  
www.glas.org

LGBTQ South Asians  
www.trikone.org

Zuna Institute – Advocacy for Black Lesbians  
www.zunainstitute.org

Web Resources – Religion and Spirituality

Affirmation – United Methodists for LGBTQ Concerns  
www.umaffirm.org
Affirmation – Gay and Lesbian Mormons
www'affirmation.org

Gay and Lesbian Vaishnava Association – Presenting the third gender as described in ancient Vedic (Hindu) texts
www.galval08.org

Integrity – A National Association of Lesbian and Gay Episcopalians and their Friends
www.integrityusa.org

Dignity USA – LGBTQ Catholics
www.dignityusa.org

Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry
www.clgs.org

Nazarene Ally
http://nazareneally.com

Soul Force

Web Resources - Transgender

Gender
www.gender.org

GenderPAC
www.truechild.org

TransgenderCare
www.transgendercare.com

Transgender Law
www.transgenderlaw.org

National Center for Transgender Equality
www.transequality.org
Blogroll

Note: Content is typically self-published or run by community groups, and are not always active links

Coming Out Stories: www.imfromdriftwood.com

Queer
  Against Equality: http://againstequality.org
  Queerty: http://queerty.com
  Queers United: http://queersunited.blogspot.com/

Genderqueer
  Genderqueer: http://genderqueer.tumblr.com/
  Midwest Genderqueer: http://midwestgenderqueer.com/

Lesbian/Dyke/Femme
  Grace the Spot: http://gracethespot.com/
  Cherry Grrl: http://cherrygrrl.com/

Money/Legal
  Queer Justice: http://blog.nolo.com/lgbtq
  Queercents: http://queercents.com/

Trans*
  Art of Transliness: www.theartoftransliness.com
  TransGriot: http://transgriot.blogspot.com/
  Transgender Express: http://transgenderexpress.wordpress.com/

Bisexual/Pansexual
  Bi Magazine: http://www.bimagazine.org/

QPOC

News/Politics
  Queer Landia: http://queerlandia.com/
  The Bilerico Project: http://bilerico.com
  The New Gay: http://thenewgay.net
  Advocate: http://www.advocate.com/
  Equality on Trial: www.equalityontrial.com

Literature/Art/Fashion/Music
  Lambda Literary: www.lambdaliterary.org
  IHIQWTHDYR? (Gay literature blog): http://www.leewind.org/

Updated: 8/2013
Reading list of LGBTQ nonfiction

Compiled by Karen Antell, Associate Professor
Head of Reference & Outreach Services, University of Oklahoma Libraries
April 2010

This list is a good starting place for finding information and resources. However, it’s not necessarily an ending place. Many, many other excellent books and articles have been published on topics relating to LGBTQ issues.

All of the books listed below are held in the OU Libraries collections. The call numbers are located below the book description. For assistance in locating these books, other books and articles, and additional information, contact me at kantell@ou.edu or call Bizzell Memorial Library at 405-325-4142. OU librarians treat all reference questions with respect and confidentiality.

Coming Out


Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 76.3 .U5 S54 1996


From Library Journal: The authors “have collected 28 first-person accounts from lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students from colleges and universities across the country. A good mix of ethnicity and college settings marks these essays, which are all tied together by the theme of coming out to oneself and to the community. Some essays are heartbreaking and others triumphant; all are engagingly written.”


From Publishers Weekly: “Reflecting the breadth and depth of the contemporary lesbian experience, these 31 coming-out stories . . . . are beautifully written, brought to life by humor and telling detail.”


From Library Journal: “This thoughtful, well-researched study provides a fresh perspective on the formative years of contemporary gay and bisexual males in our society... drawn from interviews with 180 men aged 14 to 25 years. These graphic and poignant reminiscences recount such developmental milestones as awareness and acceptance of a gay or bisexual identity, initial sexual experiences (both homo- and heterosexual), and the coming-out process, as well as delving into issues faced by youths who are both cultural and sexual minorities. Although the book is essentially a scholarly treatise, the sensitive treatment and personal narratives will appeal to well-informed lay readers.”


From Library Journal: “An extraordinary collection of 29 gay ‘coming out’ stories from writers such as Edmund White, Andrew Holleran, and Stephen McCauley. ... Each event may have been dramatic or funny or poignant, but all had a self-defining moment after which their lives would never be the same.”


From Library Journal: “Like a smart, witty friend, the author guides the reader through the terrain of gay culture, from the initial visit to a gay bar, to developing a support network, to a ‘definitive gay glossary’ of past and present argot. Throughout, Outland strongly advocates safe sex but does not shy away from frank discussion of some of the less savory aspects of gay life, including drugs, employment in the sex industry, and scam artists.”

Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 76.2 .U5 O983 2000


From the publisher: “A collection of personal coming out stories. Over seventy women and men from all walks of life describe their lives as bisexuals in prose, poetry, art, and essays.”


Especially For Families, Friends, and Allies


From the publisher: “The answers to all the questions you’ve ever had about homosexuality but were afraid to ask... including:

- How do you know if you’re gay or lesbian?
- What should you do if your child is gay or lesbian?
- Do gay parents raise gay children?”
- If you think a friend is gay or lesbian, what should you say?
- Why do gay men and women want to get married?
- What does the Bible say about homosexuality?

Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 76.3 .U5 M35 1999


From Library Journal: “A popular guide for gay people and those who want to love and support them. . . . Revolutionary when it first appeared and still absolutely necessary, this book is perhaps the most important work in a gay studies or self-help collection.”

Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 76.2 .U5 C57


From the publisher: “Written by parents who have a gay or lesbian child, this compilation of letters can help parents deal with feelings of confusion, embarrassment, guilt, or anger, while showing how ordinary families have found love, happiness, and normalcy again.”


From Publishers Weekly: “Filled with real-life stories, scientific research, and practical advice, this book stresses the importance of family acceptance for a child's self-esteem and the need to create a safe haven at home for GLBTQ teens, who often feel depressed, isolated, and harassed by peers and society at large. Jennings draws from countless anecdotal stories, as well as his own experiences growing up gay in a disapproving Southern Baptist atmosphere. Models for coming out and down-to-earth tips on dealing with the various stages of acceptance are thoroughly explained.”


From Booklist: “Bernstein, father of a lesbian daughter, writes of parents' confusion when they learn their children are gay. He realistically describes the initial feelings of grief . . . and he offers a survival guide for parents who have just learned they have a gay child. Especially valuable is the chapter 'Parents Speak Out,' which tells the personal stories of families who are incorporating gay children into their familial identity. Bernstein's tone is personal, his advice is sound, and he gives much play to the support organization Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG).”

Self-Help

From Library Journal: “The title of this excellent book perfectly captures the feelings of anticipation and bewilderment that most gays, lesbians, and bisexuals feel after the initial trauma of coming out. McNaught focuses on the problems and issues likely to confront newly out gay men and women. He sensitively and sensibly addresses topics including heterosexism, internalized homophobia and heterophobia, sexuality, relationships and gay marriage, legal and financial problems, workplace issues, family matters, religion and spirituality, and the special needs of gay youth.”
On order at Bizzell Memorial Library (April 2010)

From Library Journal: “Berzon’s experience as a psychotherapist in the homosexual community for over 16 years most definitely shows in her practical and compassionate advice on ways to strengthen same-sex relationships.”
Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 76.3 .U5 B47 1990

Thoughtful analysis of internalized shame and its impact on self-esteem, identity, and intimacy. Helpful for those in the process of coming out and anyone wishing to have a greater understanding of homophobia.

From the publisher: “This compassionate guide delves into the unique problems of self-esteem in the gay community, and how understanding your own self-worth can allow you to function better in this complex world.”

From Booklist: “An excellent resource. The authors pepper the text with the words of a few dozen young people who have been through the experiences that the book’s six sections address: self-discovery and coming out, dealing with friends and first love, dealing with family, defending and asserting oneself in school, finding solace in spirituality, and locating community support. Further, for the allies mentioned in the subtitle, Bass and Kaufman offer such chapters as ‘our pride and joy’ (for parents) and ‘making changes in churches and temples.’”
Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 76.2 .U5 B38 1996

*From Booklist:* “An indispensable guide for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning teens, as well as for their straight peers and parents, covering every aspect of being GLBTQ—from coming out to homophobia, from religion and culture to sex and sexuality. Huegel devotes an entire chapter to transgender teens, a group that is often ignored or misunderstood. The tone is always supportive and matter-of-fact, her recommendations are sensible and practical, and quotations from young people who have ‘been there’ enrich the text. Contains an extraordinary number of references to additional resources—many of them online. One of the best one-volume sources of information available about being GLBTQ.”

Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 76.25 .H84 2003


*From the publisher:* “Hundreds of thousands of gay teens face traumatic depression, fear, rejection, persecution, and isolation—usually alone. They are 190 percent more likely to use drugs or alcohol and four times more likely to attempt suicide. Love, support, and acceptance can save them. This book is for clergy, parents, educators, and politicians who cause harm with their words and actions; parents of gay teens; teens navigating this difficult time; and fair-minded people who want to help end the harm. Here are revealing stories by forty diverse Americans, plus insights from straight clergy and parents explaining their support of gay people as whole human beings guaranteed equal rights by our Constitution.”

Bizzell Memorial Library call number: Q 76.3 .U6 C75 2008

**Legal Issues**


*Amazon.com Review:* “Nolo Press legal guides provide useful and accurate information on how to manage your own affairs or, failing this, how to hire a lawyer and negotiate the court system. The rapid changes in gay and lesbian life in the past 30 years have not been reflected in the legal codes of most states, and without enforceable written agreements, gay and lesbian people may find such crucial matters as inheritance, legal guardianship, child custody, and support left to the whim of a judge or state agency. . . . Tear-out forms and sample documents are included.”

OU Law Library call number: KF 539 .Z9 C87 2007


*From the publisher:* “In its fourth edition, this fully revised and updated survey covers the rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people under present law, specifically in regard to freedom of speech and association, employment, housing, the military, family and parenting, and
HIV disease. Though not a substitute for legal counsel, this book is a useful starting point for people facing discrimination or legal uncertainty. Includes contact information for national and regional LGBT legal groups and a summary of highlights of the law state by state.”

Bizzell Memorial Library call number: KF 4754.5 .Z9 H86 2004

A few other interesting books


From the publisher: “Get the answers to these questions in Bi America:

- What is bisexuality?
- Is there a bisexual community?
- What is the culture of the bisexual community?
- What are commonalities and differences between the experiences of bi men and bi women?
- What is the special relationship between the bisexual and the transgender community?
- How have bisexuals and the bi community been affected by HIV/AIDS?
- What is the future of bisexual activism, if any?

Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 74.2 .U5 B87 2005

The Riddle of Gender: Science, Activism, and Transgender Rights. Deborah Rudacille. Pantheon Books, 2005

From Booklist: “Rudacille approaches her subject matter sympathetically and from various angles, including the people who have addressed their sexual identity issues via hormone treatment and surgery, the clinical context of transsexualism, and the scientists who have investigated and theorized about the subject. Rudacille also includes the verbatim testimony of a half-dozen people whom she interviewed in intimate detail. Undergirding her report is the recurring question of male and female identity in general: Is it socially constructed or biologically determined? Rudacille’s work is uniquely informative, particularly about the history of transsexuality.”

Bizzell Memorial Library call number: HQ 77.95 .U6 R83 2005