

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT)

You are not alone

Sexuality comes in many different forms and can in some cases be quite difficult to deal with. It may even be possible that up until now you have never considered the idea that you may not be straight.

There are people who can describe themselves as 'gay' or 'straight', whilst others feel they don't fit into either category. Whatever you're feeling in terms of sexuality you are perfectly normal. There is no rulebook which talks about what is right or wrong.

“You may be afraid to tell friends or parents how you feel. It may take time, but they will often accept the fact or maybe they know already.”

You have the right to be 'you' - so don't change! Accept and understand the way you feel. It may also surprise you to know there are many people out there in exactly the same situation as you!

Look out for

- There are no physical signs to look out for with sexuality.
- Understanding sexuality can be confusing and people might need support and guidance.
- If you experience discrimination regarding your sexuality, talk to an adult you trust or see our 'Useful Contacts' section for local information.
- If you experience homophobia or discrimination talk to an adult you trust.

Useful definitions:

Bisexual - physically, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to men and women.

Coming out - people forge a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender identity first to themselves and then may reveal it to others. Publicly identifying one's orientation may or may not be part of coming out.

Gay - used to refer to a male or female whose sexual orientation is attraction to persons of the same sex and/or gender.

Lesbian - a woman whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction is to other women.

Heterosexual - used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction is to people of the opposite sex. Also known as straight.

Homophobia - used to refer to a range of negative attitudes and feelings towards lesbian, gay and in some cases bisexual, transgender people.

Homosexual - outdated clinical term considered derogatory and offensive by many gay and lesbian people.

Transgender - term for people whose gender identity differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transsexual - appearing as, wishing to be considered as, or having undergone surgery to become a member of the opposite sex.