

# GET THE FACTS

## ABOUT LGBTQ2S ISSUES



### IN THIS ISSUE

- WHAT DOES LGBTQ2S MEAN?
- BEING ME
- TALKING TO OTHERS
- COMING OUT
- RESOURCES



# WHAT DOES IT MEAN???

## **L**ESBIAN:

girls who are sexually and emotionally attracted to other girls

## **G**AY:

guys who are sexually and emotionally attracted to other guys

## **B**ISEXUAL:

guys or girls who are sexually and emotionally attracted to both guys and girls

## **T**RANSGENDER:

people who feel they were born into the wrong body, for example, being born with guy body parts but feeling that you are really a girl, or vice versa.

## **Q**UESTIONING:

People who are unsure of their sexual orientation may consider themselves questioning.

## Sexuality

Sexuality is a basic part of our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual lives. It influences how we feel about things and how we experience the world. Having a healthy attitude about sexuality means knowing your own values, limits, and boundaries, and respecting those same boundaries in others. This can help us be ourselves.



## What is Two Spirit (2S)?

Native cultures have historically been open to multiple gender identities: male, female, or a blend of the two, called Two Spirit. Historically, Two Spirit people had special roles in many tribes. They were revered counselors, medicine people, and representatives in negotiations.

# BEING ME

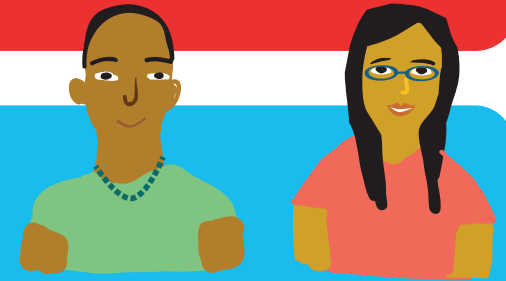
## Accept Yourself. Protect Yourself.



- Sex ed. at school isn't always inclusive - Many LGBTQ2S people do not get the information they need. Check out [www.weRnative.org](http://www.weRnative.org) and [iknowmine.org](http://iknowmine.org) to protect yourself and the ones you love.
- Protect yourself from STD/HIV.
- Always use a condom when you have sex. Every time, for every kind of sex—oral, vaginal, anal, whatever.
- Get tested. And make sure your partner gets tested too.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol. They mess with your judgment and can lead to unprotected sex. If you do drink, know your limits, so you can still make safe choices and have no regrets in the morning.
- Learn about your tribal culture's traditions around different sexual orientation and gender identities.

## What if I'm not sure?

There's really no easy way to answer this because every person is different. While there are some people who are sure about their orientation from a young age, there are many others who need time to figure things out. It can be even harder when you feel pressure from other people, like your family and friends, to be a certain way. Don't worry about feeling like you have to identify yourself a certain way, there is no rush. When you're ready, you'll know.



## What is normal?

Normal is whatever you are. This goes for everything about you, from your body shape, to your skin color, personality or whether you're gay, straight, or questioning. Many teens worry that being LGBTQ2S is wrong, weird, or shameful but there is really nothing wrong with how you or people you know choose to identify yourselves. If you think you may identify yourself as LGBTQ2S you are definitely not alone! In fact, 1 out of 10 teenagers identifies as LGBTQ2S.

# TALKING TO OTHERS

## FRIEND OR FRENEMY?

If you have a friend who identifies as LGBTQ2S, it can be hard to figure out exactly how to show your support. The best thing to do is be supportive, listen, and not share private conversations with others. As with any friendship, you want to respect your friend's choices and accept who they are. Many students have started Gay-Straight Alliances or GSAs at their schools to increase support for LGBTQ2S issues. If you're interested in starting one at your school, check out this website:

<http://www.glsen.org/>

## WHO CAN I TALK TO???

Even if you're not sure about your orientation you might still want to talk with someone to share your thoughts and feelings. It can be hard to talk with your family about this and friends might tell others without your permission. Look for someone you can fully trust, like a counselor at your school or another trusted adult who will support you.



## ABOUT COMING OUT AT HOME

Coming out at home can be a difficult thing to do. There are a few things to consider before you do so, like thinking about what your family's reactions might be or if you're really ready to come out to them. Check out the links below for more information on this topic:

<http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/news/record/1290.html>

<http://www.hatchyouth.org/ithink>

# RESOURCES

[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

**Parents, Families and Friends  
of Lesbians and Gays**

[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

**1-866-488-7386**

**Trevor Helpline Crisis  
Intervention for LGBTQ2S  
Youth 24 hours a day, seven  
days a week**

[www.trevorspace.org](http://www.trevorspace.org)

**Social networking site for  
LGBTQ2S youth, friends, &  
allies**

[www.iknowmine.org](http://www.iknowmine.org)

**Sexual health information for  
trans youth**

[www.sexetc.org](http://www.sexetc.org)

[www.wearetheyouth.org](http://www.wearetheyouth.org)

**Individual stories of lesbian,  
gay, bisexual and  
transgender youth in the U.S.**

[www.itgetsbetter.org](http://www.itgetsbetter.org)

**Support if you feel alone or  
bullied**

[www.weRnative.org](http://www.weRnative.org)

**Sexual health information  
inclusive  
of LGBTQ2S people**