

Supporting LGBTQ young people



If your child tells you they identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or questioning (LGBTQ), this is perfectly normal and not something to feel afraid of.

It may have taken them a lot of courage to tell you about their sexual orientation or gender identity, so how you react to their news will be crucial in making their experience of coming out a positive one.

Supporting your child:

If your child has just told you that they are LGBTQ the most important thing to think about is how you can best support them. Below are some first steps.

- Emphasise to your child that you will always love them, no matter what, and their sexual orientation or gender identity doesn't change this.
- Reassure your child that their sexual orientation or gender identity is as much a unique part of them as their eye colour or height. It is not something that they choose or can change.
- Listen to your child – they will be experiencing a range of feelings as a result of telling you about their sexual orientation or gender identity; be there to hear them, and reassure them, when they need to talk.
- Help them find extra support. It's important to recognise that sexual orientation and gender identity aren't problems. However, your child may need support around them outside of the family, particularly if they are interested in exploring the gender reassignment process.

We're here. Isle Listen.



Supporting LGBTQ young people

Supporting yourself:

If your child has told you that they are LGBTQ, you will be experiencing a range of feelings. It may have come as a surprise, or it may be something that you have thought about for a while.

The organisation Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (FFLAG) offers the following advice:

- Although you might be surprised or shocked by your child's news, try and remember how vulnerable they are feeling.
- Remember that they are still the same daughter or son that you have

always known and loved. Their sexual orientation or gender is part of who they are, not what they are.

- If you have a positive and supportive attitude to your child's news, family and friends are likely to take their lead from you.
- Don't conceal your emotions. If their news was a surprise or a shock that you were totally unprepared for, it is best to tell your daughter or son this. Say you still love her/him and that nothing has changed that, but that you will need time to adjust.
- Get in touch with a parents' support organisation where you will be able to talk through your emotions and listen to other parents' experiences.

