

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Learning Opportunities and Definitions Page

**Androgynous-** being neither distinguishably masculine nor feminine, as in dress, appearance, or behavior.

**LGBTQ-** lesbian, gay bisexual, transgendered and questioning (or sometimes people refer to the “q” as queer). This is a common acronym to describe a whole bunch of people.

**Coming out-** this is when a person who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered acknowledges that they are not heterosexual. Coming out includes coming out to themselves and/or others. It is usually a very scary and challenging time in an lgbt person’s life.

**Lesbian-** a woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women.

**Bisexual-** a woman or a man who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of both sexes and/or genders.

**Questioning-** anyone who is uncertain about their sexual orientation, that is, anyone who is unsure whether they are heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual. Individuals can also be questioning in regard to a transgender identity. Individuals who are questioning may or may not engage experiences with people of both sexes in their process of self-discovery.

**Gender-** refers to the presentation of a masculine or feminine self one portrays. Sex refers to male or female and gender is how you express this through your personal choice of appearance. One might identify as a man or a woman or something else entirely. Some people are now refusing to identify their gender, other than using the descriptor, “third gender”.

**Homophobic placement-** when any child, whether identified as heterosexual or lgbtq, is placed in a home that is hostile and/or hateful to lgbtq people. This kind of placement is emotionally unsafe for children of any sex, gender, or orientation.

**Sex education-** if you don’t know what this means, we’re scared of you. But seriously, most sex education is oriented towards heterosexuals; therefore it’s important to ask lgbtq youth if they have information they need to practice safe sex.

**Transgender-** an umbrella term used to describe folks who are transsexuals (pre and post operation); transvestites; cross dressers; persons with ambiguous genitalia; persons who have chosen to perform ambiguous social genders; and persons who have chosen to perform no gender at all.

**Homophobia-** the fear and hatred of lgbtq people. The fear of being perceived as gay or lesbian.

**Internalized Homophobia-** is when folks take on the negative and self-hating beliefs that homophobes have expressed to them. These feelings include: shame, self-hatred, fear and denial of sexual feelings.

**Morality Issues-** many lgbtq foster youth have heard from various religions that it is immoral to be lgbtq. If a youth comes out or is considering coming out, they may fear being rejected from their foster parents, group home staff, biological family members, their church or religious practice, etc. Another conversation/concern worth having.