

Working with lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) young people

5 Minute Facts

What is it?

LGB is an umbrella term for lesbian, gay and bisexual people:

As we grow into adolescence we start to develop romantic and sexual feelings towards others. A woman who is attracted to another woman is described as a 'lesbian'. A man who is attracted to another man is described as 'gay'. Though the term 'gay' can also be used to describe a woman having an attraction to another woman. An individual who feels attracted to both men and women is described as 'bi-sexual'. This terminology relates to an individual's sexual orientation.

What does the law say?

In 2010, the Equality Act stated clearly that individuals should not be discriminated against regardless of their sexual orientation.

What is 'coming out' and what barriers or difficulties might LGB young people face?

Adolescence is a difficult time for many young people as they struggle with bodily changes, understanding their identity and feeling accepted by their peers and others. Feeling attracted to someone of the same gender or sex or feeling attracted to both genders may leave a young person feeling isolated or confused.

The process of 'coming out' is, when a young person makes this disclosure about their 'sexual orientation'. Professionals should be sensitive to this as often this can be a difficult and confusing time for a young person.

It maybe that the young person's family, friends and community accept the young person's sexual orientation, however this may not always be the case. Consequently the young person may become subject to homophobic bullying, may no longer live with their immediate family or may be rejected by friends and family, all of which could have an impact on their mental health and emotional well-being.

What is available for LGB young people?

The Albert Kennedy Trust can provide support in relation to LGBT young people and homelessness.

The Broken Rainbow charity provides advice and support in relation to same sex domestic violence - helpline: **0800 9995428**.

Stonewall have produced a comprehensive guide to working with LGB young people. They have a website and an advice line: **08000 502020**.

The Government Equalities Office in 2014 published a review of 'what works' in tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.

All the local info I need is just a click away!



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