



**Out &
Proud
Program**

fact sheet

What a LGBT Affirmative Practice Looks Like¹

1. Do not assume that a client is heterosexual.
2. Believe that homophobia in the client and society is the problem, rather than sexual orientation.
3. Accept an identity as a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person as a positive outcome of the helping process.
4. Work with clients to decrease internalized homophobia that they may be experiencing so that clients can achieve a positive identity as a gay or lesbian person.
5. Become knowledgeable about different theories of the coming out process for gay men and lesbians.
6. Deal with one's own homophobia and heterosexual bias.

Not being homophobic or heterosexist is not enough to have a supportive practice. You must also celebrate and affirm lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two spirit, and queer identities. LGBTQ children and youth will need to understand that homophobia is wrong, not them as a person. Through the exploration of how homophobic ideas and practices are hurting them they can heal from the wounds inflicted upon them. In turn they can also understand how they hurt themselves by continuing to believe in stereotypes and myths about LGBTQ people and community. Healing from self hatred can then take place.

¹ Appleby and Anastas (1998), J.W. (Eds). Not just a passing phase: Social work with gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. New York: Columbian University Press

**Fostering Safe Spaces For People Of All Sexual And Gender Diversities:
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgendered, Intersex,
Queer, Questioning And Others**