

LGBTQ+ Youth

Tips for parents

with quotes from
young people

WEARECAMHS

1

Asking questions is good ... just ask them in a calm environment and make sure it comes from a place of curiosity rather than conflict

"I think the more you interrogate someone the less answer you're going to get. If you're asking questions make sure they're just calm and in a casual conversation rather than in a debate. It's easier to talk to parents and authority figures when it's not from an aggressive place"

"When I came out people kept treating me like I was just someone to be interrogated. I wanted to just make casual conversation and explain how I felt rather than having answers forced out of me"

"Be curious"

"Bring issues or queries you have up with them when the atmosphere is already light and when everyone involved is in a good mood the young person will be grateful for this."

"Many arguments between my parents and me have been about my gender identity, and most of them stemmed from me being mis-gendered in the midst of another argument unrelated to lgbt. Calling my parents out in an already heated argument was never the right thing to do and should always be avoided. Same for the parents though, don't bring lgbtq+ into a random argument as a comeback; this hurts feelings and can have a negative effect on the young person's perception of themselves or you."

"Respond calmly"

"They might not have the answer to all your questions straight away"

2

Try not to repeatedly ask questions like 'are you sure?' in relation to gender identity or sexuality.

"Try not to get too fixated on future orientated 'what if' questions early on. If things change then they change."

"I identify as non-binary and I think of gender and sexual orientation as though they are a clothing size or a shoe size; you were once an adult size 1 in shoe size but now you are an adult size 8. That doesn't mean that you were never a size 1, it just means that time has passed on and changed- the same can happen with gender identity or sexual orientation."

"No one can predict the future so why assume that we know anything for certain, we know just as much about that as you."

"It's ok to ask, but not so much repeatedly, and after I've said yes."



3

Avoid the phrase “I’m not homophobic, but...”

“Despite the disclaimer what’s said after... it is usually still homophobic.”


“I’m not homophobic I just don’t want to be associated with them” was something one of my friends was told by an acquaintance of ours, but despite what he thought, that was very homophobic and quite offensive.”

“Whenever we hear the phrase I’m not homophobic but... normally 9 times out of 10 means you’re going to say something homophobic. I think rather than just saying that you should think about what you’re going to say first, and if you feel the need to say that, you probably just shouldn’t say it at all.”

“Try to avoid saying I’m not homophobic then ‘blank,’ it normally means to us that you’re going to say something homophobic.”

4

Be mindful of stereotyping



“So I remember a specific incident at my old school in the changing rooms- I overheard girls talking about how that they think if there are lesbians in the room, they might be staring at them. If I were a teacher and I heard this I would want to educate them on the matter instead of just blanking it out and pretending that like no one heard it. I think it’s important to realise that these kinds of things can really hurt people. I’m not a pervert, I’m just a lesbian.”

“Some of the things that people have said to me that have made me angry- for example I don’t like football, but because I’m a boy I’m apparently meant to like football. I remember I was listening to a song which is a stereotypically girly song and they told me “you seriously need to get yourself a football team.” It made me really upset and frustrated as that’s just not what I like.”

“Please don’t treat my sexuality like it’s the only trait I have, because I have a personality. I’m not just your lesbian best friend. Similarly, just because I’m not butch doesn’t mean I’m not an actual lesbian.”

“I’m allowed to like girlish things and boyish things without this being linked to my sexuality.”

5

Stick up for your child



“One of my biggest fears about being gay is in public when I’m holding my boyfriend’s hand that people will stare at me and my boyfriend holding hands... and I feel that I will be attacked.”



“I know that my parents would support me if I was abused [in public] but I’d advise other parents that they should step up for them, if they see them being abused and tell them it is not their fault and that it is the homophobic person’s fault.”

