

PFLAG was founded in 1972 when a mother publicly supported her gay son. It has grown to more than 400 chapters and 200,000 members and supporters.

Our Vision: PFLAG envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected and valued no matter their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

Our Mission:

- Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ
- Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ
- Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ

Adapted from Our Daughters and Sons, found at [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org).

## PFLAG HOUSTON

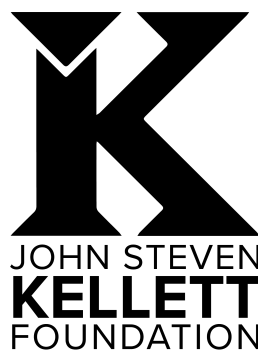
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[www.PFLAGhouston.org](http://www.PFLAGhouston.org)

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We have a monthly general meeting as well as several facilitated small support groups available throughout the month. Check our website for times and locations.



# WORDS MATTER



Learn How to Talk  
About LGBTQ Issues

Read and understand the terms  
used to talk about your child's  
LGBTQ identity respectfully

[www.pflaghouston.org](http://www.pflaghouston.org)

## Positive, supportive responses lead to healthier children.

Children that come out are worried about losing your love. They are worried about losing their family and home. Sadly, in too many cases, all of these things happen to LGBTQ people around the world. Your response to your child will have a huge impact on both your child's well-being and your relationship moving forward. Remember that while you often can't help how you first react to the news, you can determine how you will respond as you move forward.

Positive, supportive responses lead to healthier children. Behaviors that help:

- Talking with your child about their LGBTQ identity,
- Expressing your unconditional love for your child
- Supporting your child even though you may feel uncomfortable
- Connecting with your child and an LGBTQ adult role model
- Supporting your child's gender expression.

Negative responses can cause long-term damage. Hitting your child, name-calling, or kicking them out of the house have a negative impact on their physical and mental health. Telling your child that God will punish them, blocking access to friends, events or resources, making them keep their identity a secret and pressuring your child to be more or less masculine or feminine will only harm your child. Tell your child you love them. Some parents come to a place of support and understanding early, and for others it takes time. The important thing is that you are working towards understanding.

## Vocabulary helps with the discussion.

**Bisexual:** A person who is emotionally, romantically, physically or spiritually attracted to either men or women. Bisexuals don't need to have sexual experience with both men and women; in fact, they need not have any sexual experience to know how they feel and identify.

**Cisgender:** a term for a person who identifies as the sex or gender they were assigned at birth.

**Coming Out:** For lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, it is the process of self-acceptance that comes out to themselves and then may reveal it to others. Coming out means letting others know that they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

**Gay:** the adjective used to describe people whose enduring emotional, romantic, physical, and spiritual attractions to people of the same gender.

**Homosexual:** a term that is not used anymore to describe someone who is attracted to someone of the same gender.

**Lesbian:** a woman whose enduring emotional, romantic, physical, and spiritual attraction is to other women.

**Non-binary:** an adjective that describes a person who does not feel like a man or a woman, but somewhere in between. They may not follow gender expectations when it comes to hair, clothing, make-up and other expressions of gender.

**Pansexual:** the prefix "pan" means whole. A person who is pansexual may be emotionally, romantically and physically attracted to any gender, or the whole spectrum of genders: man, woman or non-binary.

**Queer:** Traditionally a negative term for gay, some people, especially younger people, use the term to describe themselves. They feel it captures their more fluid identities. Many within the LGBT community continue to dislike the term and find it offensive. To be on the safe side, don't call someone queer unless that is how they described themselves to you.

**Sexual Orientation:** Emotional, romantic or sexual feeling toward other people. Straight people have these feelings for others of the opposite gender. LG B experience these feelings for people of the same gender. Bi people have these feelings for both genders.

**Transgender:** A term that describes a person whose gender does not match their assigned sex at birth. Some people alter their bodies hormonally or surgically to match their identity. Others do not. Some non-binary people consider themselves transgender.