



Fact Sheet

Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) myth-buster

It is important to remember that most of the negative stereotypes of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people are based on inadequate information and fear. Here are some myths and facts to challenge misconceptions.

MYTH: It's a 'choice' to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.

Sexual orientation and gender identity are not choices, any more than being left-handed or having brown eyes or being straight are choices

The choice is in deciding whether or not to live your life openly and honestly with yourself and others.

MYTH: All gay men are promiscuous (have multiple partners).

A recent survey of 8,000 lesbian and gay men in couples revealed that 56% of gay men and 71% of lesbians were in steady monogamous relationships.

MYTH: All gay men are effeminate (womanly). All lesbians are butch (manly).

Some gay men are effeminate but just as many aren't. Some lesbians are butch but just as many aren't. It's possible, indeed probable, that some of your friends, colleagues, relatives or acquaintances are lesbian or gay but you haven't recognised it because they haven't told you and they don't look or act like the media's stereotype of gays or lesbians. Also some people are judged by others to display what they consider to be effeminate or butch characteristics, but are not gay/lesbian people.

MYTH: Children raised by LGBT parents will not have proper male and female role models.

Children find role models in every environment with which they are involved. Most LGBT parents make sure that their children have consistent, positive contact with teachers, grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends and neighbours. Positive role models come in many forms.

MYTH: HIV and AIDS are gay diseases.

HIV is not a gay disease. All of us are at risk in getting HIV from unsafe sex or other modes of blood to blood contact, like sharing needles, therefore heterosexual males and females can and do also become HIV positive. The truth is that 16,000 people worldwide are infected with HIV every single day (World Health Organization). Many of these are not gay.

MYTH: Most Lesbians or Gays regard themselves as members of the opposite sex.

The majority, if not all gays and lesbians are very happy with their gender. In many ways, their sexual identity is seen as a celebration and an affirmation of their gender, not rejection of it. People often confuse homosexuality with transsexuality and or transvestism. Transsexual people feel as if they were born into the wrong body and should be the opposite gender. Transvestites are people who often dress in the clothing of the opposite sex. Most transvestites are heterosexual.

MYTH: Gay men want to be women and like to dress up in women's clothes.

Only a tiny minority of gay men are transvestites or transsexuals.

MYTH: Lesbians and Gays could be cured by having "Good Sex" with a member of the opposite gender.

Homosexuality is not a disease and therefore does not require a cure. Many gays and lesbians have had satisfying heterosexual sex in their life time, but most gays and lesbians would never choose to be sexually active with members of the opposite sex and would resent and challenge the idea that you have to be heterosexual to have "good sex".

MYTH: In a homosexual relationship, one partner usually plays the role of the husband and the other plays the role of the wife.

This is not necessarily so. Most gay and lesbian couples work to develop relationships based on principles of equality and mutuality where they are loved for who they are and not for the roles they play. This comes back to stereotypical role play. They are usually just two men sharing roles or two women sharing roles.

MYTH: Homosexuality does not exist in nature, therefore it is not natural.

Historians tell us that homosexuality has existed since the earliest of human societies. Anthropologists report that homosexuals have been a part of every culture. One study of non-western cultures, reported that 64% of the respondents considered homosexuality as "normal and socially acceptable". It is also a well known fact that same sex behaviour also occurs in many other species and therefore is not "unnatural".

MYTH: LGBT people can access the same services as everyone else and don't need special attention

LGBT people have the same rights and responsibilities in relation to health, social care, housing, leisure and education services as any other member of the community. To withhold services because of someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, or to subject LGB&T people to discrimination, is illegal. Many LGB&T people still have difficulty accessing services for various reasons including discrimination such as, homophobia and transphobia.

Contact Us

If you are a St. Leger Homes tenant and you feel your treatment is affected by being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, we may be able to help or to refer you to someone who can. Contact us by email communityliaison@stlegerhomes.co.uk or ring us on 01302 862287 for advice.



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