

MYTH OR FACT ?

1. I don't know any lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) people, especially any old LGBT people.
2. Homosexuality is abnormal and sick.
3. Loving people of the same sex is immoral/sinful.
4. Gay, lesbian and bisexual people could become straight if they wanted to. It's their choice to be gay.
5. Homosexuality is a mental illness and can be cured by appropriate therapy.
6. Gay people could be cured if they have good sex with a person of the opposite sex.
7. Deep down, lesbians want to be men, and gay men want to be women.
8. Gay, lesbian and bisexual people can be identified by their mannerisms, appearance or choice of occupation.
9. Gay, lesbian and bisexual people are promiscuous and can't maintain long term relationships.
10. The majority of child molesters are gay.
11. Aids is a gay disease.
12. Gay, lesbian and bisexual people shouldn't be parents. Their children will be poorly adjusted.
13. If a child grows up with gay or lesbian parents, that child will most likely grow up to be gay or lesbian.
14. There's no such thing as a bisexual; they just can't make up their minds.
15. Transsexuals just need to be comfortable with the bodies they were born in.
16. Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people are protected by civil rights laws. They don't need any special rights.
17. Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people are different.

1. **MYTH:** I don't know any gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people, especially any old LGBT people.

FACT: You may not know any that are out to you. 10% of the population is LGBT. Estimates range from 1.75 to 3.5 million older lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people nationwide (Terry/Blade and Linda M. Woolf. *Gay and Lesbian Aging*.)

2. **MYTH:** Homosexuality is abnormal and sick.

FACT: American Psychological Association states: "it is no more abnormal or sick be to homosexual than to be left handed." Homophobia is abnormal.

3. **MYTH:** Loving people of the same sex is immoral/sinful.

FACT: Many religious denominations do not believe this. What is universally understood is that intolerance and hatred is wrong.

4. **MYTH:** Gay, lesbian and bisexual people could become straight if they wanted to. It's their choice to be gay.

5. **MYTH:** Homosexuality is a mental illness and can be cured by appropriate therapy.

6. **MYTH:** Gay people could be cured if they have good sex with a person of the opposite sex.

FACTS: Most studies indicate that those who are highly motivated to change their sexual orientation may change their behavior, but not their underlying desire. In fact, it is often societal homophobia that forces people to attempt change. The energy to change should be directed towards dismantling homophobia so that people will feel comfortable with their sexuality whatever that may be.

"The Psychological, medical and psychiatric establishments agree that sexual orientation cannot be changed, and that so-called "reparative therapy" aimed at altering gay people's orientation does not work and may, in fact, be harmful."

7. **MYTH:** Deep down, lesbians want to be men, and gay men want to be women.

FACT: Most lesbians enjoy being women and are attracted to women and most gay men enjoy being men and are attracted to men rather than women.

8. **MYTH:** Gay, lesbian and bisexual people can be identified by their mannerisms, appearance or choice of occupation.

FACT: Some lesbians are masculine and some gay men are effeminate, but this does not apply to all LGBT people. LGBT people are as diverse in appearance, attitudes, and behaviors as heterosexuals. They cross all racial, religious, class and ethnic backgrounds. They are employed in all professions and occupations.

9. **MYTH:** Gay, lesbian and bisexual people are promiscuous and can't maintain long term relationships.
FACT: As with heterosexuals, LGBT people form a variety of relationships from one to many years. Heterosexuals had a 49% divorce rate in 1989, which suggests that there is nothing inherent about heterosexuality for the maintenance of strong long-term relationships.
10. **MYTH:** The majority of child molesters are gay.
FACT: Studies have shown that over 90% of child molesters are heterosexual men. There are no laws keeping heterosexual men away from children.
11. **MYTH:** Aids is a gay disease.
FACT: The majority of people with HIV around the world are heterosexual. HIV is a virus that effects everyone – young, old, men and women.
12. **MYTH:** Gay, lesbian and bisexual people shouldn't be parents. Their children will be poorly adjusted.
13. **MYTH:** If a child grows up with gay or lesbian parents, that child will most likely grow up to be gay or lesbian.

FACTS: 1 out of 4 families have an LGBT person in their immediate family. Heterosexual parents are consistently not found to be more loving or caring than their LGBT counterparts. “Good parents are good parents regardless of their sexual orientation. It's clear that the sexual orientation of parents has nothing to do with the sexual orientation or outlook of their children.” (Jocelyn Elders, Former U.S. Surgeon General.)
14. **MYTH:** There's no such thing as a bisexual; they just can't make up their minds.
FACT: Bisexuals can make up their minds, they are attracted to men, or to women, or equally to both sexes.
15. **MYTH:** Transsexuals just need to be comfortable with the bodies they were born in.
FACT: Many transsexuals spend years in therapy trying to adjust to the bodies they were born in. It is only as a last resort that they start taking steps to change their bodies.
16. **MYTH:** Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people are protected by civil rights laws. They don't need any special rights.
FACT: In a few states and cities around the country, they are protected in the areas of housing, employment, public accommodations, and credit, but in most places they are not accorded equal rights under the law.
17. **MYTH:** Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people are different.
FACT: All LGBT people are people first. LGBT people have the same emotions and needs as all people. They laugh, cry, love, hate, hope, dream, suffer, grieve. They need food, water, shelter, and companionship. As most people in our world today, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people have the need to be accepted and be part of a family and a community.