

SUPPORTING LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Messages we want to send:

- People have the right to express their gender however they choose.
- A person's gender identity and sexual orientation are part of who the person is; they are part of their identity.
- We do not discriminate against LGBTQ+ individuals.
- I can help you sort out if you are LGBTQ+.
- I believe you when you come out.
- I can give you facts about LGBTQ+ people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).
- I accept you for who you are.
- I have resources that can help you get support.

Responses to support LGBTQ+ individuals:

A person says, "I don't know if I am transgender or gay or what?"

- I am really glad you told me this.

- It sounds like you're having trouble sorting this out.
- Can you tell me what you are feeling and thinking about whether you are LGBTQ+?
- Here is a list of words that explain how people feel. Do any of these seem like you?

A person hints at being gay, "I have a friend who says he is gay. Do you know anyone who is gay, and do you think it is ok?"

- Many people are LGBTQ+, and I do know some people.
- Everyone deserves to be accepted for who they are, just like you deserve to be accepted for who you are.

A person says, "I am a lesbian."

- I'm really glad you told me this.
- Is there anything I can do to support you with that?

A person says, "Now that I have accepted myself as non-binary, how do I tell my family?"

- That's a great question. How do you think your family will respond?
- Sometimes, it's easier to practice with someone you trust and know, who will respond positively.

- Is there anyone in your family that you trust like that?

A person says, “How do I meet other people who are LGBTQ+?”

- That’s a great question. There are online groups, events, and places where LGBTQ+ people like to get together.
- There are also Rainbow Support Groups to meet other LGBTQ+ people who also have disabilities.
- How would you like to connect with LGBTQ+ people?

General Response About Disability and Disclosure:

A person asks, “Should I disclose that I have a disability when looking for a date?”

- That’s a good question. Some people do disclose, and others wait. Do you have a sense of what you’d like to do?
- Let’s do the pros and cons of disclosing your disability. What would be good about disclosing right away? What could be a negative of telling right away?
- Now, let’s look at the pros and cons of NOT disclosing. What would be good about NOT disclosing right away? What could be a negative of waiting to disclose your disability?

Rainbow Guide Book

This guidebook is about understanding the lives and experiences of LGBTQ+ people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This is for supporters, such as family members and service providers, so that they can learn how we want to be treated and supported.

<https://rainbowguidebook.com/chapters/introduction/>