

**The Washington State
Department of Social
and Health Services
exists for the purpose
of helping people
to achieve a better
quality of life.**



DSHS does not discriminate and provides equal access to its programs and services for all persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, creed, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, age, veteran's status or presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability.

STATE RESOURCES

Families Like Ours
Adoption Exchange & family support,
education, and advocacy
603 Stewart St., Ste. 902
Seattle, WA 98101
1(877) 230-3055
(206) 441-7602
www.FamiliesLikeOurs.org

Ingersoll Gender Center
www.ingersollcenter.org

**Parents and Friends of Lesbians
and Gays (PFLAG)**
PFLAG National Office
1828 L Street, NW, Ste. 660
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 467-8180
Email: info@pflag.org
www.pflag.org/Washington

The Trevor Project
(Suicide Prevention special
emphasis on LGBT concerns)
8704 Santa Monica Blvd., Ste. 200
West Hollywood, CA 90069
(310) 271-8845

LGBT Centers
Tacoma Rainbow Center
www.rainbowcntr.org

Olympia Rainbow Center
www.rainbowcenter.org

Inland Northwest LGBT Center
www.spokanerainbowcenter.org

YOUTH CENTERS

B-GLAD Drop-In (Bellevue)
(425) 747-4937
www.youtheastideservices.org

Just Us Youth (Bellingham)
www.northwestyouthservices.org

Q Center (Silverdale)
2841 NW Kitsap Place, Ste. A
Silverdale, WA 98383
(360) 698-3335
www.theqcenter.org

GLOBE Youth Program (Everett)
PO Box 12884
Everett, WA 98206
Email: globeleaders@hotmail.com
(425) 263-2908
www.globeyouth.com

Oasis Youth Center
2215 Pacific Ave.
Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 671-2838
www.oasisyouthcenter.org

Odyssey Youth (Spokane)
1121 S. Perry Street
Spokane, WA 99202
(509) 325-3637
FAX: (509) 443-3980
www.odysseyyouth.org

Stonewall Youth (Olympia)
P.O. Box 7383
Olympia, WA 98507
(360) 705-2738
www.stonewallyouth.org

Lambert House (Seattle)
P.O. Box 23111
Seattle, WA 98102
(206) 322-2515
www.lamberthouse.org

For more information about the
DSHS Office of Diversity and Inclusion
visit our website at:
www.dshs.wa.gov/dao/



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services
DSHS 22-1511 (Rev. 9/13)

Promoting Safety

for Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, Transgender,
and Questioning People



Think before you speak

Common words and phrases and even questions asked in conversation can have an unintended adverse impact on those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGBTQ). This is especially important with young people but for all people, avoid saying things like:

- *That's so gay*
- *Man up*
- *You're such a sissy*
- *That's not very lady like*
- *You dress like a boy*
- *They live the gay lifestyle*
- *Homosexuality is a choice*
- *It's just a phase*
- *Do you have a boyfriend or girlfriend?*
Instead try, "Is there someone special?"

Rather than asking questions about family structure and parenting such as, "are you married?" You might ask:

- *Do you have a partner?*
- *Will you be co-parenting?*

What you can do

There are a number of things you can do as a DSHS employee to improve safety for LGBTQ clients and colleagues:

- *Know and follow state laws and DSHS policies*
- *Challenge your own opinions and biases*
- *Take advantage of training opportunities*
- *Learn about local resource material*
- *Learn and counter the myths*
- *Speak up on behalf of someone who is being targeted*
- *Never refer a client to any therapy that claims to reverse or "cure" variations in sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.*
- *Show respect*
- *If you see something, say or do something*
- *Practice good customer service*
- *Evolve beyond "tolerance"*
- *Accept and respect each individual*
- *Create a safe space for co-workers and clients*
- *Describe yourself as an ally*

Why this matters

The Department of Social and Health Services exists for the purpose of helping people to achieve a better quality of life.

Being lesbian, or gay, or bisexual, or transgender is not a choice, it's not a behavior, or a lifestyle, it is an integral part of who individuals are at their very core.

It isn't up to us to make philosophical, theological, or political judgments about personal identities but we do have a professional, legal and ethical obligation to put personal opinions or biases aside and provide the very best care to those we serve.

Rejecting behaviors toward LGBT people can have catastrophic consequences. Those of us who work in human services must make every effort to ensure safety and acceptance for LGBTQ people.

There are a number of things you can do as a DSHS employee to improve safety for LGBTQ clients and colleagues.

It's the law

Washington state law (RCW 49.60.030) and DSHS policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. DSHS Administrative Policy 7.22 goes further to require respect for everyone with whom we interact regardless of difference.

