



Allsorts Youth Project (Brighton) listens, supports & connects children and young people under 26 who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or unsure (LGBTU) of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

allsortsyouth.org.uk

TOP TIPS

For working with LGB Children and Young People

The FJYPB and Allsorts Youth Project have worked together to create these TOP TIPS to guide professionals who work with lesbian, gay or bisexual children and young people.

1

- If asking a young person about their relationship status, do not assume the gender of their partner. It is always best to use gender neutral language when asking the question. "Do you have a partner?" is better than "do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend?"

2

- If a young person tells you that they have an opposite gendered partner, this does not mean they are heterosexual, just as having a same gendered partner does not make them gay! Don't assume a young person's sexual orientation, ask them.

3

- Be conscious of not perpetuating stereotypes about LGB people e.g. assuming all gay men are camp/effeminate; lesbian women are butch/masculine; bisexual people are 'confused' and so on.

4

- Do not encourage the young person to 'come out' about being LGB to their parents/carers if they are unaware, unless they have told you that they want to. Pushing a young person to disclose that they are LGB before they are ready could be detrimental to their wellbeing and/or safety. There is **never any obligation for a young person to 'come out'**.

5

- Consider that a child/young person living with a parent or carer who doesn't respect their identity can be at emotional risk and there may be a potential safeguarding concern.

6

- Ask the young person whether they need any LGB specific support (but don't assume that they do.) Inform yourself of available resources and local support options for both young people and parents/carers.

7

- Rainbow flags, badges or LGBT specific posters can help young people to feel that they are in a safe and inclusive space and identify you as a LBG supporter.

8

- Consider carefully whether sharing information with other professionals about a young person being LGB is **relevant to the issue you are supporting them with**.

9

- Never ask, suggest or dismiss a young person's LGB identity as a phase. This is invalidating of their identity and could inhibit trust between you.

10

- If you are unsure whether asking a young LGB person about their relationships and identity is appropriate (unless it relates to their safety), consider whether you would ask a heterosexual young person the same thing. If not, reflect on whether it is a necessary question.