

Homosexuality

There are currently thousands of children in this country being raised in gay households, according to GLAAD. The 2000 U.S. census reported that 33% of lesbian and transgendered households had at least one child under the age of 18 living at home. The numbers continue to grow despite some states banning gay couples from fostering and adopting children.

Top 3 Reasons Gay Couples Claim More Relationship Satisfaction than Straight Married Couples

1. **They fight fair.**

OK, maybe your patience could use some fine-tuning, or he hasn't nailed the concept of stacking the dishwasher. Sure, it's normal to occasionally get on each other's nerves. But studies show that while same-sex couples have their share of conflict, they're better at keeping the peace than their heterosexual counterparts. In fact, these couples rarely resort to name-calling, don't rehash past grievances, and most importantly, pick their battles. "Men and women have distinct arguing styles and since each gender can relate to each other effectively, resolution is a lot smoother," says Esther D. Rothblum, a professor of women's studies at San Diego State University. Another element to marital success: humor. In a study conducted at the University of Washington, San Diego State University, and the University of Vermont, same-sex couples used jokes to diffuse tension. The key is to keep things lighthearted and make sure comments stay above -- not below -- the belt.

2. **Household chores are shared.**

We know most wives do the bulk of child rearing and chores, and husbands often bear the financial burden. But research shows that such a split is not always the case with homosexual couples -- in these unions, cooking, cleaning, and child care are split right down the middle. "In traditional families, the husband is expected to work long hours and women to maintain the household, largely because that's what people learned growing up," says Rothblum. "But in same-sex households, these stereotypes don't exist, and couples divvy chores based on who is better at what." So figure out which jobs you naturally gravitate toward and go from there. If your hubby doesn't notice when the doorknob's jammed, but is a whiz in the kitchen, consider turning over your oven mitts. Your role reversal will have a twofold effect: Your kids learn jobs aren't gender-biased, and you'll try your hand at something new.

3. **Sex is a two-way street -- sometimes.**

When it comes to lovemaking, conventional wisdom says men are ready for sex in seconds while women need tons of coaxing into bed. However, researchers found that in homosexual couples, men and women had similar sexual habits. But here's the twist: with gay couples, both men initiate sex frequently, and with lesbian couples, the women are both passive. If you've fallen into some predictable bed

patterns of your own, take turns giving and receiving. By handing over the reins, you'll nix worries like "Am I doing it right?" or "Is he enjoying this?" and can focus purely on your satisfaction (which is really the whole point)!

Around one in 20 kids is gay, according to family psychologist Dr. Pamela Varady. "A lot of parents -- especially moms -- suspect their child is gay prior to knowing for sure. In general, it's a good idea not to directly ask your child if he is gay, but to let him shape the conversation. If you pry, you risk taking power away from the child. The only exception to this rule is if you suspect your child is in crisis --suicidal, inflicting injury upon himself, et cetera," says gay teens expert Ritch Savin-Williams, chairman of Human Development at Cornell University and author of "The New Gay Teenager" (2005).

How Moms Can Talk to Their Kids about Homosexuality

With more pop culture figures coming out as homosexual, and gay marriage making news headlines, there's a good chance that your children might have questions about homosexuality. Family psychologist Dr. Pamela Varady shares tips to help moms discuss the topic with kids.

If your child asks, "What's a lesbian?" or "What does gay mean?" Dr. Varady says honesty is the way to go. It's important for two reasons:

1. You want your child to be accepting of others and not discriminate.
2. If they are gay or lesbian, you want them to know that you understand what that means and that you can handle it.

Dr. Varady shares the following "how-to" guidelines:

- Define it. Say something like, "Some people are heterosexual and some people are homosexual. Heterosexual is like Mommy and Daddy, when a woman and a man care about each other and are attracted to each other. A homosexual is when people of the same gender -- two men or two women -- love each other, care about each other, and are attracted to each other. When two women love each other and are attracted to each other, we call it 'lesbian.' When two men love each other, they are called 'gay.'"
- Normalize it. You have to try to normalize the word: "Sometimes homosexuals like each other and care about each other so much, they like to live together and make a family together, just like Mommy and Daddy."
- You should also be open -- handle it with ease. Look like someone who is open to being asked any question. When children learn about new things, there are typically lots of questions. If they keep questions inside, their imaginations can run wild. Or their peers answer their questions and the answers can be inaccurate, and at times, scary. Also make sure to ask, "Is there anything else you want to ask Mommy about it?"

- Revisit the subject: Be willing to revisit the topic a couple of days later or a week later. You cannot expect it to be resolved after only one conversation. Do not wait for them to bring it up.
- Show them diversity: It's important to introduce your children to all different kinds of people, including homosexuals. If they've never met a lesbian or a gay man, introduce them to someone. It will help them to see that they are like everyone else. You should expose your children to homosexuals, not shield them.

This discussion should be made easier by the fact that being gay simply does not carry the same stigma it did years ago. There are gay characters on TV shows like "Degrassi," "Desperate Housewives," "Ugly Betty," and "Gossip Girl." For many, homosexuality is no biggie. Explaining it to your kids doesn't have to be either.

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