

## Parenting a LGBTQ Teen

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No matter what their orientation or identity, the teen Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning, need a supporting environment during their teen years. First place, they look is to their parents. We find the more the parents are accepting, affirming, the more support they can give to their sons and daughters when they are going through their coming out phase of their life. The easier it is to be them self, happy and real. Include them in family functions. Let them bring their friends over, this will help them and you with open communication.

More information about the risks and challenges facing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth, we have learn more about their strengths and resiliency, families supporting their children's health and well-being. This is an important component, due to the family being the primary support for children and youth, and family involvement helps reduce adolescent risk. With our children and youth coming out at younger ages increases risk for victimization and stress in family, school and community settings, and provides opportunities for helping to support and strengthen families.

A question was posed to me, "What does a supportive parent look like?" Look in the mirror, it may be you. Simple answer, is someone loving, caring and supportive. It is in how you define parents and family who they most important individual in teen's life will be.

There are so many issues that a youth might go through, bullying, teasing, fear, losing friends and family rejections. All of these need to address and support given to each individual, one supportive person can help reducing the thoughts or attempts of suicide.

There are many organizations that can help, they are listed below:

**The Trevor Project** Founded in 1998 by the creators of the Academy Award®-winning short film TREVOR, The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) young people ages 13-24.

**PFLAG** Mission/Vision: By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through: -Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ; -Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ; -Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.

**GSA Network/Clubs** Our overall strategy for fighting for educational justice, youth-led groups and GSAs, empowering them to educate their schools and communities, advocate for just policies that protect LGBTQ youth from harassment and violence. All of our work with students focuses on leadership development.

**Tulare Youth Service Bureau – Out Loud Support Group** support group for LGBTQ youth facilitated by counselors

## **.Warning Signs for Suicide**

Suicide is preventable. The majority of young people having thoughts of suicide give some sort of blue about their intentions. If someone you know is depressed or exhibiting any of these warning signs, ask them if they are considering suicide.

Here are some signs to look for:

- Developing a plan for suicide and/or obtaining the means to follow-through on a suicide attempt
- Expressing suicide feelings (e.g. “I want to kill myself,” “I wish my life were over,” or “Life isn’t worth living.”)
- Making final arrangements, talking about their funeral and giving away valued possessions.
- Displaying signs of depression (e.g. loss of pleasure in activities they used to enjoy, prolonged sad mood, changes in eating or sleeping patterns, expressing feelings of hopelessness or guilt).
- Engaging in self-destructive behavior (e.g. start of or increase in alcohol or drug use, risky sexual behavior, reckless driving).
- Expressing that they are suffering a great deal and feel that there is no hope for a better future with phrases such as: “It won’t matter soon anyway.”
- Pulling away from family and friends.

If you or someone you care about is exhibiting any of these signs, please do not hesitate to call The Trevor Lifeline at 866-488-7386. Your call is free, confidential and trained counselors are available 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

For more information on educational program, outreach, resources, meeting dates, time and location go to the websites.

The Trevor Project: <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

PFLAG Tulare-Kings Counties Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pflagtkc/>

GSA Network: <http://www.gsanetwork.org/>

Tulare Youth Service Bureau: <http://www.tysb.org/theraphy.html>

