

Learning about Power, Privilege and Oppression

Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia.

People who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual may experience harassment or discrimination from people who are scared of or uncomfortable with these identities. Homophobia can take many different forms, including negative attitudes and beliefs about, aversion to, or prejudice against bisexual, lesbian, and gay people. It is often based on irrational fear and misunderstanding. Some people's homophobia may be rooted in conservative religious beliefs. People might hold homophobic beliefs if they were taught them by parents and families.

No one has the right to discriminate against or bully another person or to hurt them emotionally or physically. There are several things you can do to help stop homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia:

- Don't ever use negative or offensive language to describe LGBTQ people.
- Be careful of how even casual language — such as saying "that's so gay" — can hurt others.
- Don't believe stereotypes about LGBTQ people or make assumptions about them.
- Be a vocal supporter of the LGBTQ community, regardless of your own sexual orientation and identity. This is called being an ally.
- Let the LGBTQ people in your life know that you're a friend and ally.
- Educate yourself on LGBTQ issues.
- Respect LGBTQ people's decisions about when and where to come out.
- Join your school's Gay/Straight Alliance, or start one at your school. GLSEN can help with that.
- Remember that being LGBTQ is just one part of a person's complex identity and life.
- Show as much interest in your LGBTQ friends' or family members' partners as you would show in a straight person's partner.

Responding to Oppression in Our Work

Speak up when other people are being homophobic or biphobic, such as making offensive jokes, using negative language, or bullying or harassing someone because of their sexual orientation or identity.

Additional reading and resources:

- [What is homophobia?](#) Planned Parenthood
- [The Gender Creative Child](#) by Diane Ehrensaft
- [For Colored Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Not Enough](#) by Keith Boykin
- [Queer Brown Voices: Personal Narratives of Latino/a Activism](#) by Uriel Quesada

For more resource and reading, see our [Anti-Oppression Reading and Discussion Resource List](#).