t, or hatred of gays, lesbians, or bisexuals in oneself. Homophobia, anti-gay, or anti-homosexual behavior or belief, or support for traditional sexual behavior with gays, lesbians, or bisexuals;
- behavior and fear of insanity.

Heterosexism includes the inferiority of homosexual people. Heterosexuals (telling “queer jokes,” harassment; institutional, immigration, child custody; and cultural norms [no homosexuals in the media, in

DiversityWorks
201 North Valley Rd
Pelham, MA 01002
(413) 256-1868

Federation P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
PO Box 27605
Washington, DC 20038
(202) 638-4200

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund
666 Broadway #410
New York, NY 10012
(212) 995-8585

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
1517 U St. NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 332-6483

National Hotline to Report Hate Crimes
(800) 347-HATE

DiversityWorks, Inc. is dedicated to the creation of a society where human diversity and connection are our most treasured resources. We help individuals and organizations to recognize the value of differences and to develop skills for creating genuine multicultural relationships and organizations. Through this work, we move toward a vision of a society based on principles of true democracy, social justice, and affirmation of our connectedness.

We conduct trainings to increase the sensitivity of participants to various forms of social oppression. Our programs enable people to take steps against heterosexism, racism, sexism, classism, Jewish oppression, and disability oppression. We conduct skill development and action planning programs which help participants to function as change agents and to create multicultural organizations.

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Introduction

“Homosexuality” is a clinical term. Most male homosexuals generally prefer to be called “gay men” and most heterosexual women generally prefer to be called “lesbians.” Much of the prejudice against lesbians and gay men is based on stereotypes and lack of information. Due to our socialization and fear of the unknown, people who are different from the majority can be threatened. The purpose of this brochure is to present factual answers to questions most often asked about homosexuality so that you can better understand such a connection with someone of either gender.

What Is Homosexuality?

Homosexuality is the capacity to feel love and sexual satisfaction with someone of the opposite gender. Heterosexuality is the capacity to feel love and sexual satisfaction with someone of the same gender. Bisexuality is the capacity to feel love and sexual satisfaction with someone of either gender. Although the terms are not known, many researchers believe that one’s basic actual orientation is determined at birth and is established by a very early age. While some gay and lesbian individuals believe they are born gay, it is known that the majority of these individuals are not born gay.

What Causes Homosexuality?

Perhaps a better question is: “What determines sexual orientation?” There is no research that proves that sexual orientation is determined at birth and is established by a very early age. While some gay and lesbian individuals believe they are born gay, it is known that the majority of these individuals are not born gay.

How Many Gay Men and Lesbians Are There?

The Kinsey Institute, conducted in the 1940’s and 1950’s, suggests that approximately 10% of the population is gay or lesbian. Though some researchers believe this estimate to be too high or too low, it is safe to assume that lesbians and gay men constitute a significant minority group. Consequently, even though we may not be aware of their sexual orientation, they are not only a small group but also a significant one. Because of the strong societal pressure to be heterosexual, however, some people do not realize that a heterosexual lifestyle does not meet their needs until later in life, perhaps even after they have been married for years.

Do Lesbians and Gay Men Hate The Opposite Sex?

No. Lesbians and gay men are no more likely to have a low opinion of men or women than are heterosexuals. While some gay and lesbian individuals believe they are born gay, it is known that the majority of these individuals are not born gay.

Do Lesbians and Gay Men Want To Be The Opposite Sex?

No. Lesbians and gay men do not want to be heterosexual. They have an emotional, sexual, and social identity that is more comfortable with someone of the same gender. They do not want to change their sex.

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