

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and/or Questioning

Young people have the right to define their own sexuality and should be supported in the decisions they make about their own sexuality. However, many young people experience homophobia (the fear and hatred of those who love and sexually desire those of the same sex.¹⁵) and transphobia (the fear, hatred, disgust and discrimination of transgendered people because of their non-conforming gender status¹⁶), which have significant impacts on their health and wellbeing.

It is the responsibility of all people who work with young people to ensure that their services are supportive of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and/or Questioning (GLBTIQQ) young people. People who work with young people should have an understanding of young people's individual construction of identity and work to ensure that they are supported through this process.

In this section you will find:

- Some tips for working with GLBTIQQ young people;
- Some services for GLBTIQQ young people; and
- Resources including more services, information and some key dates for your diary.

Remember: All services in the *Big Red Book* are available to GLBTIQQ young people.

The following sections also contain GLBTIQ resources: Art and Recreation; Counselling; Family; Health and Sexual Health; Legal; Peak Body; Youth Support and Youth Support in Secondary Schools.

Ways of Working

Some tips for workers to assist young people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and / or questioning (GLBTIQQ)

This section was developed in collaboration with the Queer Youth Advocates Network.

What's in a label?

If in doubt, don't use a label. Take the lead from the young person. Don't assume or impose a label or stereotype. As the acronym "GLBTIQQ" suggests, this is a diverse group of people with a wide range of issues.

¹⁵ Not Round Here. 2000. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.
http://www.hreoc.gov.au/pdf/human_rights/Not_round_here.pdf

¹⁶ Laframboise, S. An Introduction to: Gender, Transgender and Transphobia
<http://mypage.direct.ca/h/hrp/gendertr.html>

Tips for working with young people

Some things that people working with GLBTIQQ young people can do to help reduce isolation and fear include:

- Be aware of issues that affect young GLBTIQQ people, such as the complexities of gender, sex and sexuality as well as broader social (family, friends, church, etc.) and psychological issues.
- Be careful of the language that you use. Do not encourage or condone the use of phrases such as 'that is gay', even if they are not intended to be insulting.
- Listen to the concerns of the young person. Be conscious of your own assumptions regarding sexuality and gender, be willing to challenge your own assumptions and don't pass judgment because of these views. Acknowledge the limits of your knowledge / expertise / ability to provide support and seek further education or training to re-dress these.
- Do not say 'it is just a phase' or that everything will necessarily be all right, as these may create false hopes.
- Have information available for young GLBTIQQ people that they can read, or be able to refer them to appropriate services or resources.
- Create environments where homophobia is not condoned and young GLBTIQQ people feel safe, such as becoming a 'safe space'.

Developing a GLBTIQQ friendly service:

Do you...

- Have anti-homophobia posters?
- Stop staff and young people when they use GLBTIQQ derogatory words?
- Provide information specifically for young GLBTIQQ people?
- Provide diverse safe sex information?
- If you provide free condoms, do you provide lube for each condom, and dental dams as well?
- Have the ability to refer young people to appropriate services that are specifically for, or sensitive to, the needs of GLBTIQQ young people?
- Have 'safe place' recognition?
- Have policy and procedures that recognise the needs and diversity of GLBTIQQ people?

Services

There is no youth specific services in the ACT for young people who identify as GLBTIQ. The following profiles are volunteer-run support groups for young people.

Bit Bent (Belconnen)

Social support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual or questioning young people.

Phone	(02) 6264 0260
Mailing Address	PO Box 679, Belconnen ACT 2616
Email	bit_bent@hotmail.com
Website	www.bitbent.org
Location	Cnr Chandler St & Swanson Crt, Belconnen

Who Can Access:

Age 12 – 25

How to Access By phone, email or drop in. The group meets on Mondays from 6pm – 8pm.

Programs Provides information, referrals, community information panels, sessions and workshops; as well as events for Youth Week and SpringOut festivals.

Families Information and resources are available for family and friends of group members.

Bit Bent (Woden)

Social support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual or questioning young people.

Phone	(02) 6286 3037
Mailing Address	PO Box 35, Woden ACT 2606
Email	bit_bent@hotmail.com
Website	www.bitbent.org
Location	Woden Youth Centre, Callam St, Woden

Who Can Access:

Age 12 – 25

How to Access By phone, email or drop in. The group meets on Thursdays from 5pm – 6.30pm.

Programs Provides information, referrals, community information panels, sessions and workshops; as well as events for Youth Week and SpringOut festivals.

Families Information and resources are available for family and friends of group members.

The following services also provide GLBTIQ programs:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Counselling, Support and Education Program, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander)

- AIDS Action Council ACT (Health and Sexual Health)
- Canberra Sexual Health Centre (Health and Sexual Health)
- Children and Young People Focus Worker, Domestic Violence Crisis Service (Youth Support)
- Children and Young People's Workers, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (Youth Support)
- Family and Adolescent Counselling Services (Family)
- Junction Youth Health Services (Health and Sexual Health)
- Open Family Australia (Youth Support)
- SCOPE (Youth Support)
- Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (Health and Sexual Health)
- Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander)
- Youth Law ACT (Legal)
- See also the Youth Centres section

Resources

More Services

ANU Sexuality Department

Represents the interests of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, intersex and queer students by providing information, referral, support, representation and advocacy.

Phone: (02) 6125 163

Email: sexdep@anu.edu.au

Web: sa.anu.edu.au/index.php?module=content&contentID=124

Bent Lenses

A community organisation that regularly screens Queer related films. They also run a film festival during the SpringOUT Festival in November.

Web: <http://bentlenses.interact.com.au/index.html>

Canberra Institute of Technology Student Association Sexuality Office

Offers a support service staffed by volunteers for CIT students experiencing sexuality issues

Phone: (02) 6207 3600

Web: www.citsa.com.au

Jellybabies

ANU Student's Association

A social group for queer and queer-friendly young people and students. Hosts events including film nights, parties, picnics, coffee afternoons, and pub get-togethers. To join the JellyBabies email list, send a blank email to jellybabies-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Email: jellybabies-owner@yahoogroups.com

Web: clubs.anu.edu.au/clubs/Jellybabies

New Canberra Transgender Network (NewCTN)

A group organised by and for all transgender persons aged 18 and over, their families and support people. Offers support and advice.

Web: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NewCTN/>

Police Gay & Lesbian Liaison Officer (GLLO)

Australian Federal Police

Contact officer for local gay and lesbian people. Phone and ask for the GLLO Officer.

Phone: (02) 6256 7777

Web: www.afp.gov.au

Qnet: Canberra's Queer Youth Cyberspace

An online community for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people under the age of 25. It's also a place for their friends, family, teachers, supporters and peers to offer support, get information and make new contacts.

Web: www.qnet.org.au

THROB (Telephone Help Referral and Outreach Bureau)

Aids Action Council ACT

A support, information and referral line for men who have sex with men. Provides a listening ear, information on a range of issues including HIV/AIDS, STDs, gay/bisexual/transgender issues, sexual health testing, injecting drug use, needle exchange programs and safe sex.

Phone: (02) 6247 2726

Email: tonyb@aidsaction.org.au

Web: www.aidsaction.org.au

University of Canberra Students' Association Sexuality Officer

Offers support and represents the interests of queer students at the University of Canberra.

Phone: (02) 6201 2000

Web: sa.canberra.edu.au

Womens Information and Support Helpline (WISH)

Aids Action Council ACT

Telephone support, information and referral line for women. Provides a listening ear, information on a range of issues including HIV/AIDS, STD's, lesbian/bisexual/transgender issues, sexual health testing, injecting drug use, needle exchange programs and safe sex.

Phone: (02) 6257 4915

Email: tonyb@aidsaction.org.au

Web: www.aidsaction.org.au

More Information**ACT Education Department Initiatives for Same Sex Attracted Students**

Homophobic comments or discrimination based on sexuality, sexual orientation or harassment based upon a perception of another's sexual orientation is sexual harassment. The Equity Executive Officer, ACT Department of Education and Training, is available to provide information and support.

Phone: (02) 6205 6346

Web: www.det.act.gov.au

Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society: Same Sex Attracted Youth Research

A social research centre located within the Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University. Research, information and resources are available.

Web: www.latrobe.edu.au/ssay/

COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere)

Aims to engage, connect, and empower people to make the world a better place for children of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender parents and families. Based in the USA.

Web: www.colage.org

In Our Own Write

A project run by same-sex attracted young people for young people. Has developed a book about what it's like to be a young gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender young person in Canberra in 2007.

Web: www.qnet.org.au/inourownwrite/

Sexuality and Sexual Health - Understanding Your Sexual Orientation

Family Planning Victoria

Provides some definitions and basic information.

Web: www.sexlife.net.au/2_9_1.html

The Gender Centre (NSW)

Offers a wide range of services to people with gender issues, their partners, families and friends.

Phone: (02) 9569 2366

Email: gendercentre@bigpond.com

Web: www.gendercentre.org.au

Dates for your Diary

17 May International Day Against Homophobia

This day is recognised because on 17 May 1990, the General Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) removed homosexuality from their list of mental disorders.

Web: www.idahomophobia.org

November SpringOut Festival

Canberra's queer pride festival.

Web: www.springout.interact.com.au