

Did you know that:

Scientific data show that same-gender sexuality is a normal phenomenon in the animal kingdom that has been proven in more than 1500 species. This is not only a matter of random homosexual behaviour; in many cases the animals form couples that last their entire life span.

**Places where you can find useful information:****Skeiv Verden**

– a group and a social arena for people with immigrant backgrounds who experience attraction to, sexuality and falling in love with someone of the same sex.
Tel. 928 95 737
e-mail: info@skeivverden.no
www.skeivverden.no

Landsforeningen for lesbisk og homofil frigjøring (LLH)
(The Norwegian National Association of Lesbian and Gay Liberation)

– a nationwide organization working politically and socially so that lesbians, gays and bisexuals can live openly without fear of being socially excluded, discriminated against or harassed. Oslo has a local chapter of the association.
Tel: 23 10 39 39 / 22 41 11 33
e-mail: post@llh.no / oslo@llh.no
www.llh.no / www.llh.no/oslo

Oslo Local Authority, Enhet for mangfold og integrering (Office of Diversity and Integration) (EMI)

EMI is responsible for supervising a number of measures in the city's "Action Plan against Discrimination of Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals – for Diversity and Equality", and has produced the web pages about and for homosexuals: "Skeive Sider" [Gay pages] at www.oslo.kommune.no/skeivesider

International support groups for homosexuals, their families and friends

These pages provide information and links to other relevant networks and resources.

- Parents, families and friends of gays [PFLAG], www.pflag.org
- Ai-Fatiha Foundation, www.al-fatiha.org
- Imaan, www.imaan.org.uk
- The Inner Circle, www.theinnercircle.org.za

Is your son or daughter attracted to people of the same gender? – or do you know someone who is?

Many parents have a dramatic reaction when their child tells them that they are attracted to people of the same sex. Suddenly you are worried about the future and are forced to address and take a stand on issues that you felt had nothing to do with you, until now. At the same time that you have to support your daughter/son, you also have to deal with your own reactions and concerns. What was once something that "happens to others" is suddenly very much a part of your world.

Over time you may be confronted by reactions from relatives, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Most parents in the same situation want someone to share their thoughts with, but only a few know of someone who has had or is having the same experience. Many feel they need to learn more about this topic in order to understand, accept and tackle this new situation.



How should you react to the new situation?



Knowledge and networks

It is important to learn more about this to help with your doubts and uncertainties. Your daughter/son can explain what it is like to be attracted to members of the same sex. Information about this is also available on the internet (see tips on the back page), in libraries, at organizations like Skeiv Verden and Landsforeningen for lesbisk og homofil frigjøring, and from the health authorities.

You are not alone. Contact other like-minded parents/families, e.g. through the network groups listed on the right, to learn more about this situation and to

share experiences.

Guilt feelings

When told that their son/daughter is homosexual, parents have many feelings – denial, shock, anger, guilt – that may require a lot of time and energy to work out. Some parents blame themselves and ask: “What did I do wrong?” “What could I have done differently?” It is important to know that nothing you have done, could have done or can do has influenced or will influence your child’s sexual preference.

“I have a dream to be accepted. I have a dream that Pakistanis and Muslims will understand that a homosexual has not chosen to be a homosexual. We just are this way.”

Homosexual with Pakistani background

Acceptance and support

Society is full of prejudices against homosexuality and homosexuals, which is why many may hesitate to be open about their sexual preference. They may fear being rejected, harassed or even ostracized. Your son/daughter has probably been through a long and difficult process and it has taken great courage to

acknowledge their sexual preference to themselves and to you their parents. That is why it is important that parents accept and support their child. They have shown great trust in opening up to you – be proud of their honesty; show them that this trust is well deserved.

Love

Love is important to us all, and your child deserves the same. Getting married will not change your daughter’s/son’s sexual preference, and will also not be fair to the spouse. It is fully possible to live a good life without being married, and it is a human right to choose who you want to live together with and if you want to be married.

Informing others

Discuss with your son/daughter about how and when you want to tell others. Wait until both parties are ready for this and remember that your immediate environment may need time to get used to the new situation.

“I was angry when Mona told me that she was lesbian; what will the neighbours think? No grandchildren for me. It took some months for me to realize that this wasn’t about me, but about Mona’s life and about her being happy in life.”

Mother

[From the brochure “Glad i deg uansett” (“Love you regardless”), published by LLH]



Did you know that:

It is estimated that 3 – 5% of the world’s population is attracted to a person of the same sex. This is not unnatural or against the natural order of things, but something that exists in all countries and all cultures. In Oslo there are around 130 000 people with a minority background and according to the statistics between 4000 and 6500 of these are homosexual.

Contact a network group!

There are several local network groups for parents and families around the country, most are affiliated with LLH (www.llh.no).



The groups support parents and families who contact them, and aim to help people live the life they want, freely and openly in accordance with basic human rights. They are obliged by law to guarantee confidentiality and you can be 100% anonymous.

Contact info:

Familienettverk (Family network), Oslo

Tel.: 473 88 882

e-mail: oslo.familienettverk@llh.no

[www.llh.no/LLH_der_du_bor/Oslo_og_](http://www.llh.no/LLH_der_du_bor/Oslo_og_Akershus/Undergrupper/Familienettverket/)

[Akershus/Undergrupper/Familienettverket/](http://www.llh.no/LLH_der_du_bor/Oslo_og_Akershus/Undergrupper/Familienettverket/)

Skeiv Verden – a network group for gay people with immigrant backgrounds.

A special group for muslims

Tel.: 928 95 737

e-mail: info@skeivverden.no

www.skeivverden.no

Åpen Kirkegruppe (Open church group)

Tel.: 482 76 933

www.apenkirkegruppe.org

International Health and Social Group [IHSG]

Tel.: 22 68 07 00 / 977 85 733

e-mail: post@ihsg.no

www.ihsg.no