

The Rainbow Resource Centre is a non-profit, community-based charitable organization that serves as the central agency offering support, information, counselling, referrals, library, and public awareness on issues related to sexual orientation, gender diversity, and anti-homophobia education.

CONTACT US

General Inquiries: (204) 474.0212 Ext. 201
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Counselling: (204) 474.0212 Ext. 201
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The Rainbow Resource Centre is open:
Monday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Tuesday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Wednesday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Thursday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Friday 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm
(closed weekends and statutory holidays)

Please visit our website:

www.rainbowresourcecentre.org

The Rainbow Resource Centre envisions a society in which diverse sexual and gender identities are included, valued and celebrated as a result of our active commitment to promote and maintain dignity, human freedoms and human rights.

Lesbian?

LESBIAN

Female-identified people attracted emotionally, physically, and/or sexually to other female-identified people.

The term lesbian is derived from the name of the Greek island of Lesbos.

- Adapted from the Trans-Academics "LGBRRSQI Terminology."
<http://www.trans-academics.org/lgbttsqiterminology.pdf> (2006).

Lesbos, located in the East Aegean Sea, was where Sappho, the ancient Greek lyric poet, lived. Sappho ran a school for young women in the 6th Century BC. The majority of Sappho's poetry reflected the passion she had for her students. "Sappho's literary association with love between females has led to the term lesbian."

- Adapted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. "Lesbian."
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesbian> (2006).

There is no right or wrong way of being a lesbian. Stereotypes often portray or dictate what society thinks lesbian individuals should look like and how they should act. Lesbian women can be feminine or masculine, quiet or outspoken, liberal minded or conservative. What's most important is to be yourself.

How do you know? Subtle or strong indications, like sexual feelings or attractions to a person of the same-gender, may appear out of no where, causing a person to question their sexual orientation. For some others, they may not have to question this attraction because they 'just know.'

Questioning your sexual orientation is completely normal and natural, along with the uncertainty and fear that comes with it. Those questioning their sexual orientation can feel different from others - they may feel alienated or excluded in conversations surrounding crushes, partners, or assumed heterosexual.

There is no test that will indicate if a person is a lesbian or not. An individual must figure it out for themselves.

For individuals who want to learn more.

WHERE ARE THEY?

Lesbian individuals are everywhere – in every community, job industry, culture, age group, religion, and socioeconomic position. They participate in life the way they choose; for some, being a lesbian is only a small part of their identity.

Conforming to stereotypes may bog you down, so be yourself. **A person's sexual orientation is invisible, only you and those you choose to tell will know you are a lesbian.**

There is no rush to categorize, identify, or label oneself. Each individual discovers their own sexual orientation at their own pace. Some may embrace and others may deny their attractions.

Unfortunately, homophobia often makes it difficult to acknowledge this part of one self. However difficult it may be, it is important to note that denying one's sexual orientation may lead to increased mental and physical health risks including self-loathing, depression, decreased self-esteem, isolation, self-destructive behaviour, such as substance abuse, and unsafe or risky sexual behaviour. In extreme cases, denial and shame may result in attempted or completed suicide.

Whatever the risks, disclosure of one's sexual orientation is up to the individual and should only be done when they are comfortable and feel safe to do so.

COMING OUT:

Coming out is an expression people use when they **voluntarily disclose** their sexual orientation and/or gender identity to others. It is a process that generally occurs on three levels: personal (with oneself), private (family and friends), and public (at work or in the community at large). Every coming out experience is different. For some, it may be very positive and for others, it may be very negative; or it could be a combination of both.

While some folks may come out, others choose to remain “in the closet” because of fear of discrimination, lack of support, and/or fear of rejection. The best time to come out is **when you are ready**. If you choose to disclose your sexual orientation with anyone, be sure it is someone you trust; someone who is a good listener, who will respect confidentiality, and will be encouraging.

Remember, **you are not alone in this**. Coming out is a life-long journey. There are resources available in your community as well as people who are willing to support you.



HOMOPHOBIA:

The irrational fear, dislike, hatred, aversion, intolerance, and ignorance of homosexuality and of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two-Spirit, and queer (LGBTTQ) individuals.

Although homophobia has always existed, it is only recently that we were able to give it a name, and, especially, that we came to realize that it constitutes an unacceptable attitude in a civilized society, which can be equated to sexism or racism. - Adapted from the National Day Against

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

Local Links:

Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre:
(204) 477.1123 www.fgwrc.ca/Home.htm

**Klinik Community Health Centre
24 Hour Crisis Line:**
(204)786.8686 or 1.888.322.3019 (Toll free)
TTY 784.4097
www.klinik.mb.ca

L*ACE: lesbian social group that participates in Winnipeg's arts, culture, and entertainment scene.
<http://acelace.spaces.live.com>

RAY (Resource Assistance for Youth):
24 hour help line: 1.800.668.4663 www.rayinc.ca

Outwords Inc. (local LGBTT* magazine):
www.outwords.ca

Nine Circles Community Health Centre:
(204) 940.6000 or 1.888.305.8627
(Toll free in Manitoba)
STI Info: (204) 945.2437 or Toll free
1.800.782.2437 www.ninecircles.ca

SERC (Sexuality Education Resource Centre)
(204) 982.7800 (Winnipeg)
(204) 727.0417 (Brandon)
The Facts of Life Line: (204) 947.9222
Toll free 1.800.432.1957
www.serc.mb.ca

Women's Health Clinic:
(204) 947.1517 or TTY (204) 956.0385
www.womenshealthclinic.org

National and International Links:

Women Lovin' Women:
www.actortoronto.org/website/home.nsf/pages/womenlovinwomenpdf

Get It On:
www.getiton.ca

COLAGE
(Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere):
www.colage.org

Egale Canada: www.egale.ca

PFLAG Canada:
www.pflagcanada.ca

GLSEN:
(Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network)
www.glsen.org