

# Gay Support: Where to Find LGBT Help and Support Groups

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Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) support can be extremely helpful for people but only if gay people feel comfortable enough to get it.

One of the challenges in reaching out for support if you're gay is that you may feel that others who are not gay will not understand your particular situation. Luckily there are many support groups for LGBT people. These gay support groups can help people through the challenges associated with gay discrimination and stigma. LGBT groups are often targeted towards specific groups of people. You might find targeted GLBT support groups for:

- Teens
- University/College students
- Family members and friends of gay people
- Adults
- Men or women

## What Can Support Groups for LGBT People Offer?

Gay support can help someone dealing with issues anywhere along a continuum - from the point where they are questioning their sexuality through dealing with the challenges of possibly coming out at work or struggling with gay relationship issues. Support groups for LGBT people often do this through peer support. This means that support groups are led by other LGBT people and not necessarily professionals. This allows LGBT people to support each other through life's challenges.



Some LGBT support groups may also be run by professionals. This might be a professional group facilitator or even a mental health professional. Being gay, of course, is not a mental illness, but support groups can often benefit from professional leadership.

Gay support groups for the families and friends of gay people can offer help with:<sup>1</sup>

- Helping a gay loved one through the challenges of coming out
- Parenting a gay youth
- The coming out process of the family member or friend

- Coping with changes in expectations due to sexuality (expectations of marriage, grandchildren, etc.)
- Dealing with discrimination and stigma
- Feeling included and normalizing minority sexuality
- Finding an accepting community

Gay support groups offer similar advantages for LGBT people:

- Help in coming out
- Help in dealing with interpersonal, religious or family rejection
- Resources
- Help with workplace or school challenges
- Dealing with internalized homophobia
- Finding others "just like you"
- Help with homosexuality and mental health issues

## **Finding LGBT Support Groups**

LGBT support groups can be found through mental health organizations and professionals like:

- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI)
- [Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance](#) (DBSA)
- The [Gay and Lesbian Medical Association](#)
- The [Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists](#)

LGBT family and friend support groups can be found through this [Gay Parent magazine directory](#) or through [PFLAG](#) – Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

Gay help and resources can also be found through local LGBT organizations and online. For online gay help support groups, check out:

- [DailyStrength](#)
- [SupportGroups.com](#)
- [MDJunction](#)
- [QueerAttitude.com](#) (for gay teens)