

PERMANENCY PLANNING

For CAREGIVERS of
LGBTQ+ Children & Youth

Tip Sheet Regarding Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, & Expression (SOGIE)

To engage a caregiver around their child's SOGIE, be inquisitive just as you normally would any caregiver. Be curious and interested about what is going on in their home and who they are.

- Let them know that whatever feelings they have are normal, and they can process those with you. Let them know that they should not process those feelings with or around their LGBTQ+ or gender expansive child.
- Help the caregiver explore their feelings around SOGIE.
- Engage the caregiver to tell them about the child's strengths.
- Use resources to help them understand the differences between sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression.



IMPORTANT TO KNOW

There are also situations where a parent/caregiver is being supportive of their child's SOGIE, and a third party observes this and reports that the parent/caregiver is being abusive by affirming the child's SOGIE. When assessing for risk/harm/abuse it is essential to understand that affirming or supporting a child's SOGIE is not abuse nor neglect.

FOR MORE INFORMATION REFER TO ACL 19-92

<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Additional-Resources/Letters-and-Notices/ACLs/2019/19-92.pdf>

INFORMATION

STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FOR THE CAREGIVERS

Caregivers of LGBTQ+ children are often scared for their children because of their SOGIE and how they may be treated.

Tell me how you feel about your child's SOGIE?

It is normal to feel this way, tell me more about it? What scares you?

Please tell me about your [insert here: religion, culture, beliefs], I want to know more about you?

How does your [insert here: religion, culture, beliefs] view LGBTQ+ folks?

Caregivers of LGBTQ+ children often feel grief because their child does not conform to their expectations. This could be related to religion, culture, beliefs in general, or not knowing about SOGIE.

Caregivers want the best for the children in their home and they need more information about SOGIE.

I can see you care about [insert name]. Let's work together to improve your relationship with them. I'd like to give you some information and resources about SOGIE.

Caregivers of LGBTQ+ children may also feel that other children in the home might get negatively "influenced" by the LGBTQ+ child. They may also believe that a child's SOGIE may result in sexual activities with other children in the home.

What are your concerns about the other children in your home?

It is important to know that sexual orientation and gender identity or expression are each separate (refer to gender abacus).

A child's SOGIE is not about sexual behaviors. Age appropriate supervision is for all children in the home.

Caregivers may think that being LGBTQ+ is a choice or that being around other LGBTQ+ peers may "make" the child LGBTQ+.

Just like straight folks cannot be influenced to be straight, LGBTQ+ folks cannot be influenced to be LGBTQ+. It is important for the child's mental health, spirit, and self-esteem to be around peers who are, look or feel the same way they do. Let us find some community resources.

Caregivers may not know that not being affirming may affect a child's mental health and increase suicidal thoughts, AWOLS, seeking relief in drugs, etc.

Did you know that kiddos who are not affirmed are 8x more likely to attempt suicide? More likely to run away, do drugs and end up on the street?

Caregivers may not know how to be affirming.

It is important to treat LGBTQ+ kiddos like any other child in your home. They need support, affection, and to feel good about themselves just like any child.