

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, & Expression Affirming Key Principles

- It is a good idea to have a LGBTQ+ friendly sticker or button on you, your clipboard, or your computer. It will let them know you are an ally.
- Use gender neutral language.
- Everyone has a Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE).
- Refrain from assuming someone's SOGIE.
- When inquiring about a young person's SOGIE, asking is better than avoiding.
- Incidents involving SOGIE are often invisible and not addressed, so being inquisitive about SOGIE is important.
- Incidents involving SOGIE are more prevalent than not, and may interact with dynamics of power/control, substance abuse and mental illness in the family.
- Not all incidents involve SOGIE, but it is something to keep in mind.
- LGBTQ+ children feel invisible and are often blamed for what happens to them.
- The increased risks faced by LGBTQ-GE+ youth are not inherent to their identities, but stem from the stresses of prejudice, discrimination, rejection, and mistreatment.
- A child who is being abused because of their SOGIE may not feel comfortable "coming out" to you. Be patient and help them feel affirmed.
- Never "out" a child/youth. If SOGIE needs to be discussed with others, ask the child's permission to discuss their SOGIE.

Created in collaboration with Bay Area Academy

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