



RAINBOW RESOURCE CENTRE

SERVING MANITOBA'S GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND TWO-SPIRIT COMMUNITIES

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.

The Rainbow Resource Centre envisions and works toward an equal and diverse society, free of homophobia and discrimination, by encouraging visibility and fostering health and self-acceptance through education, support, resources, and outreach.

Peer Support/Info Line:

(204) 284.5208 or 1.888.399.0005

(Toll free in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario)

Monday to Friday: 7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

(subject to volunteer availability)

Counselling: (204) 452-7508

counselling@rainbowresourcecentre.org

Administration: (204) 474.0212

info@rainbowresourcecentre.org

fax: (204) 478.1160

Address: 170 Scott St.

Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3L 0L3

The Rainbow Resource Centre is open:

Wednesday-Friday: 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Monday-Friday: 7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

(subject to staff and volunteer availability)

Please visit our website:

www.rainbowresourcecentre.org

Lesbían?

For individuals who want to learn more about it.

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 passion she had for 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, as there is no right or wrong way to eat an apple. Stereotypes often portray or dictate what society thinks lesbian individuals should look like and how they should act. Being a super masculine, army boot wearing, short hair spiking, hairy legged construction worker *might be* a stereotype of a lesbian. This may be true for some people, but not all lesbian folks. There is no "lesbian code" to abide by.

How do you know? Subtle or strong indications, like sexual feelings or attractions to a person of the same-sex, 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. Questioning individuals usually feel different from others - they may feel alienated or excluded when conversations surrounding opposite sex crushes, partners, or activities come up.

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

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; 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. A person may choose to embrace or deny their same-sex attractions.

Unfortunately, homophobia often makes it difficult to acknowledge this part of ourselves. However difficult it may be, it is important to note that denying ones sexual orientation may lead to increased mental and physical health risks including self-loathing, depression, decreased self-esteem, isolation, self-destructive behavior, 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 ones 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 ones self), 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, and Two-Spirit (LGBTT) 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>

f3: Female Freak Forum: Winnipeg social group for queer, lesbian, bi, ftm, mtf and trans persons. email: femalefreakforum@gmail.com

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

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

Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition:
www.rainbowhealth.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