



## **10 Things Children and Youth May Want Their LGBT Foster or Adoptive Parents to Know**

1. Let me tell my friends and other people in my life about our family, in my own time, and in my own way.
2. I may have heard myths and stereotypes about LGBT people. Help me to understand more about the realities and diversity of LGBT people's lives. Help me to critically reflect on media messages and representations.
3. Help me to connect with other kids who have LGBT parents (if I want to).
4. I love you and support you AND it is not my job to be an advocate for LGBT rights. Please respect my choice if I don't want to go to the Gay Pride Parade (or another LGBT event). I may want to do these things. I may not. It may depend on the opportunity or particular point in my life.
5. I might be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender non-conforming, straight, or questioning, and I may identify in another way. Please be supportive of my healthy development – whatever my identity may be – and understand that it's not about you!
6. Teach me respect for diversity by modeling a response to prejudice, discrimination, and injustice. Help me to develop my own responses and help me to think about my safety.
7. Please talk to me honestly and let me ask questions whenever I have them.
8. Sometimes you (and I) may feel like the world is watching, and we have to be the perfect family.
9. Understand that sometimes it might be easier for me to talk to another supportive adult about questions I may have. I might be afraid of hurting your feelings.
10. Remember: On a day-to-day basis, it's not about having gay or transgender parents, it's about having parents!

By Gary Mallon and Tracy Serdjenian. (May 2012). Thanks to Mary Keane and family for review and feedback!

Sources referenced in developing this resource:

- Coming Out to Your Kids. Colage. (October 2010) <http://www.colage.org/resources/coming-out-to-your-kids/>
- Gender in LGBTQ Families (Webinar). Lesbian and Gay Family Building Project. (January 2012) <http://www.prideandjoyfamilies.org/resources.php#1>
- The Family Pride Guide to Talking with Your Child about Political Attacks on our Families. Family Pride. By Corri Planck and Cris Farenthold. <http://www.familypride.org/publications/prideguide.pdf>