
General Overview Of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, & Other (LGBTQ+) Families

This essay is about families with LGBTQ+ parents. The things being discussed are how children of these families thrive socially and academically, what challenges they might face, how materials in classrooms reflect LGBTQ+, if they are welcomed into early learning programs, and if there are written materials that appropriately give light to diverse families.

Do Children Raised in These Families Thrive (Academically and Social Emotionally)?

It seems that children of LGBTQ+ parents can thrive social-emotional wise as much as children with heterosexual parents. According to The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), research shows that children with gay and lesbian parents do not vary in their emotional development or interaction with peers and adults from children with heterosexual parents (2019). This means that a child's social-emotional development is not affected by whether or not their parent(s) identify as gay or lesbian. The only difference there seems to be is that children of LGBTQ+ parents tend to be more open and accepting of diversity (Clarke and Demetriou, 2016 pg.133). This is because their parents will teach them to be open and accepting of others. So, children with LGBTQ+ parents can thrive socially and emotionally because with this kind of attitude their friends will most likely enjoy talking to them. Their friends also have a higher chance of forming stronger bonds and disclose personal information to them because they will know that they are not as likely to judge.

What Are Some of the Major Issues and Challenges That Might Confront These Families?

A few challenges that might confront these families is lack of representation and misrepresentation. For instance, children's literature representing LGBTQ+ characters are not as common as books with Heterosexual characters, and sometimes they are not accurate (Cade, 2019 p.6). One other challenge that these families might face is negative social interactions. Not everyone is accepting of LGBTQ+ people and unfortunately, LGBTQ+ parents have to prepare their children for negative interactions (de Melendez & Beck, 2019 p.75). This means that both the parents and their children have to worry and look out for people that might show hate towards them.

How Do/Do Not Teacher and School Resources and Classroom Materials (Books, Toys, Dramatic Play Props, etc.) Reflect the Diversity of LGBTQ+ Families?

A study was done in May of this year by Emily Cade (2019), where she researched a handful of elementary educators and how they incorporate multiculturalism. According to Cade (2019), only 17% of the educators brought up LGBTQ+ and diverse family formations, and how they'll

look for diverse materials and authors (p.15). This means that the discussion of LGBTQ+ or other family formations was not brought up as much as other topics while discussing multiculturalism. What she discovered was that many of the books in the classroom lacked diversity and that while searching for books, many educators didn't think to look for diversity (Cade, 2019 p.7). So, this means that it depends on the class, some of the classes don't have materials that reflect LGBTQ+ families and some had educators that actively searched for materials.

Are these families welcomed into early learning programs?

It depends on the school, the teachers, and the parents of other students on whether or not these families are welcomed into early learning programs. According to Beren (2013), there have been many groups and parents that are opposed to the idea of LGBTQ+ people and learning about them (p.62). The parents learned that this was because of their sexual identity. Although, there has been work being done about this. For instance, Welcoming Schools.org have guides and resources on how to be welcoming to all children and families.

Are there appropriate written materials reflecting diverse family arrangements?

There are appropriate written materials reflecting diverse family arrangements. Books such as All Are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold, Families by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly, and Family Is a Family Is a Family, Sara O'Leary (Welcoming Schools). Each of these books portrays a variety of diverse families.

References

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